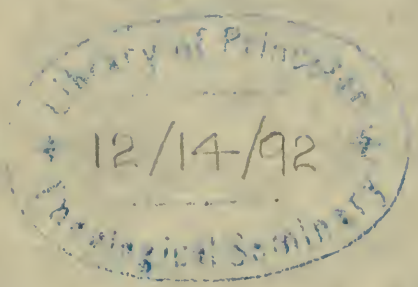

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Charles H. Spurgeon

Yours most heartily

C. H. Spurgeon

MAP OF

SOUTH-EASTERN ENGLAND

to illustrate the

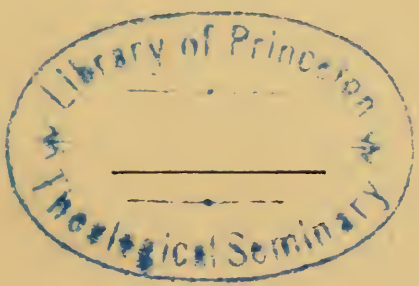
LIFE OF SPURGEON

CHARLES H. SPURGEON:

HIS FAITH AND WORKS.

BY

H. L. WAYLAND.



PHILADELPHIA:
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY,
1420 Chestnut Street.

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PREFACE.

It is impossible to acknowledge in detail all the sources which have been drawn upon in the preparation of the following pages. Special mention should, however, be made of "Charles H. Spurgeon; His Life and Labors," by Rev. George C. Needham, which is a reservoir of information as to the life of the great preacher. Acknowledgment should also be made of the courtesy of Mr. Needham and the publishers, Messrs. Bradley & Woodruff, who have allowed the use of several of the cuts contained in that volume.

The book is born of love and of a desire to perpetuate and extend the knowledge and influence of the wonderful life that has just closed on earth, so that "he, being dead, may yet speak." It is humbly commended to the prayers of all who loved and honored that great-souled servant of God, Charles H. Spurgeon.

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LIFE OF SPURGEON.

CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRY—YOUTH—WATERBEACH.

ON Saturday afternoon, December 10, 1853, a lad of nineteen years came up to London from Cambridge by the Eastern Counties Railway, landed at the station not far from the Bank, and took an omnibus to the boarding house to which he had been directed, in Queen Square, Bloomsbury. He was ruddy cheeked, smooth of face, with a distinctly rural appearance, which was italicised by the black silk stock (now happily passed away) and by his large blue silk pocket handkerchief with white spots. It was his first visit to the city; and no doubt from the top of the omnibus he gazed with curiosity at all the novel sights which lay along Cheapside, Newgate, and Holborn.

If any one had predicted that the young rustic would begin on the next day a ministry of thirty-eight years in the metropolis of the civilized world, a ministry unsurpassed in the history of Christendom; and that at last he would be borne to his grave with the burial of a king, the words would have seemed as idle tales, made of the same stuff as the wildest of the Arabian Nights. But time has a way all its own of ruining the reputations of prophets and of realizing what seemed but the fond dream of a feverish patient.

From what God had done we may safely judge as to what he meant to do.[1] And we need not hesitate to believe that it was his purpose to raise up in this nineteenth century, in the heart of London, a Puritan preacher, a preacher to the people, who with unexcelled boldness and plainness and directness and tenderness and love should call men to God.

Three things determine what a man shall be, or rather there are three things through which God determines what a man shall be,—his descent, his surroundings, and himself.

As to descent, Spurgeon had an ancestry, than which the world has seen no better. His fathers, many generations gone by, had lived in the Low Countries, whence in the sixteenth century they were driven out by the persecutions under the Duke of Alva and Philip II.—persecutions which were among the long series by which Spain impoverished herself and enriched her rivals. In the next century, Job Spurgeon was confined in Chelmsford jail thirteen weeks for conscience' sake. We may be well assured that there were men of the name and blood in the host which followed to the field the greatest captain and the most righteous ruler that England ever saw. Very likely there was a Corporal Spurgeon, versed in Scripture, who, in the regimental prayer meeting, led the devotions of his less gifted colonel, and reproved a back-sliding major, and who later, after a hard-won victory, bleeding on the field, smiled as he saw Oliver with his whirlwind of Ironsides sweep by on the way to annihilate the Malignants and to achieve liberty and good government,[2] and then died happy.

Of this lineage came Rev. James Spurgeon, who was

---

[1] "What is election but God's purpose to do what he does do?"—SPURGEON: Sermon on Romans 8: 28.

[2] We have drawn a little on Macaulay and Kingsley.

minister of the Independent Church in Stambourne, Essex, from 1810 until his death at the age of eighty-eight, in 1864. His portrait represents a face expressing firmness, a mouth that shut close like General Grant's, with a fine high forehead, and with traces of kindness and humor.

His son, Rev. John Spurgeon, was born in Stambourne, in 1811, and entered on the ministry in middle life as pastor of an Independent church in Tollesbury, whence he removed later to Cranbrook, Kent, where he was pastor for five years. After his son became eminent, the father was pastor successively of two churches in London. He now (1892) resides in West Croydon, having survived his son. He is remembered by those who knew him in his prime as an earnest, faithful preacher.

His wife (who recently deceased) was a woman of marked character and devoted godliness, whose wise and prayerful piety was rewarded by the conversion of each of her children. Her husband was once troubled by doubt if he were acting rightly in going from home so often to preach the gospel; ought he not to remain at his home and to care for the salvation of his children? As he passed the door of his wife's room, he heard her praying for each of the children, and especially for Charles. The husband felt that he might safely carry on the work of God and leave the children to the care of the Lord and of such a mother.

There was a world of meaning in the words of the father when he was told of the death of his son: "What a happy meeting there has been between Charles and his mother!"

In the day when God shall render to every man according to his work, who can say how large will be the reward of these parents and grandparents and ancestors who would

not be known but for the flaming effulgence reflected back from the light which they helped to kindle?

Of these parents, Charles Haddon Spurgeon was born June 19, 1834, in Kelvedon, Essex, where they were then residing.

When he was fourteen months old, the child went on a long visit to his grandparents, who were very fond of him. And now the surroundings began to be a forming influence. The grandfather was a man whose strong Puritanism showed itself in his "high" doctrines, in his uprightness, in his almost passionate love for Dr. Watts, and his vehement protest against the use of any other hymns. But all was consistent with tenderness and with most friendly relations with the Rector of the parish, Mr. Hopkins, the minister and the rector frequently attending each other's services.

The grandfather was a man of much originality and humor. He would say to his grandson,

"Charles, I have nothing to leave you but rheumatic gout; but I have left you a great deal of that."

Perhaps the grandfather had inherited it from Job Spurgeon, whose thirteen winter weeks in jail left him a victim of rheumatism. Sitting before the fire and rubbing his afflicted knees, he would murmur when in the eighties:

"I do believe that this rheumatism will shorten my days."

During the last summer of his life, in 1891, the Tabernacle pastor spent a few days of what he hoped was convalescence, revisiting the home of his boyhood; in "Memories of Stambourne," he has given a charming picture of the village, of the generally level scenery, and the fields "adorned with cowslips and paigles and harebells and anemones and wild hyacinths." The love of nature cherished

BIRTHPLACE OF C. H. SPURGEON.

by these rural scenes enriched his life and his ministry, and made every flower and tree at Westwood his dear friend.

In the meantime, his father had removed to Colchester, where the boy attended a school kept by Mrs. Cook, the wife of a sea-captain. Later he went to the school of Mr. Lewis, and later still, with his brother James, to a school at Maidstone. He next attended Mr. Swindell's school at Newmarket, as usher, receiving tuition in Greek in exchange for his work. Thus early, his scholarship was such as to make his services valuable. After the death of the son, the aged father read to a visitor an extract from his own diary, dated August 17, 1849: "Charles started for Newmarket this morning; his mother went with him; the Lord go with him and keep him and bless him."

As to this period of his life, Professor J. D. Everett, F. R. S. Queen's College, Belfast, who was his fellow usher, writes to the "Christian World":

From a short-hand diary which I kept at Mr. Swindell's, I transcribe a few passages.

On Friday evening, August 17, 1849, as we expected Mr. Spurgeon, the new teacher, to arrive by the coach at half-past five, we went to the heath to see the coach in. As it passed us, we saw no one outside, and only a few ladies and a boy inside; so we concluded the teacher had not come. However, the boy was Mr. Spurgeon. He is fifteen years old, and is a clever, pleasant little fellow. He comes from a collegiate school at Maidstone, in which he obtained the first prize, but he knows very little Latin and Greek, and in mathematics has done five books of Euclid, and only as far as equations and the Binomial Theorem in algebra.

Sunday, August 19.—Mr. Spurgeon is a nice lad.

Monday, August 20.—After the twelve o'clock interval, Mr. Spurgeon and I went, with Mr. Swindell's permission, into our own room and read Horace. He knows, I think, more Latin than any of the boys, but not quite as much as I know.

Tuesday, October 9.—After dinner I took Percy and four other boys to see the races. Mr. Spurgeon did not go, as he thought he should be doing wrong.

We boarded in the same house, occupied the same bedroom, took our walks together, discussed our common grievances, and were the best of friends. He was rather small and delicate, with pale but plump face, dark brown eyes and hair, and a bright, lively manner, with a never-failing flow of conversation. He was rather deficient in muscle, did not care for cricket or other athletic games, and was timid at meeting cattle on the road.

He had been well brought up in a family with strong Puritanical tendencies, and was proficient in the subjects taught in the middle-class schools of those days. He knew a little Greek, enough Latin to gather the general sense of Virgil's Æneid without a dictionary, and was fond of algebra. He had a big book of equation problems, and could do all the problems in it except two or three. He was a smart, clever boy at all kinds of book learning; and, judging from the accounts he gave me of his experiences in his father's counting-house, he was also a smart man of business. He was a keen observer of men and manners, and very shrewd in his judgments. He enjoyed a joke, but was earnest, hard-working, and strictly conscientious.

He had a wonderful memory for passages of oratory which he admired, and used to pour forth to me with great gusto in our walks, long screeds from open-air addresses of a very rousing description, which he had heard delivered at Colchester Fair by the Congregational minister, Mr. Davids. His imagination had evidently been greatly impressed by these services. I have also heard him recite long passages from Bunyan's "Grace Abounding."

He was a delightful companion, cheerful and sympathetic, a good listener as well as a good talker. And he was not cast in a common conventional mould, but had a strong character of his own.

In the following year, he went to Cambridge as usher in a school. It was during his residence here that the following advertisement appeared in a Cambridge newspaper:

No. 60 Upper Park Street, Cambridge.

Mr. C. H. Spurgeon begs to inform his numerous friends that, after Christmas, he intends taking six or seven young gentlemen as day pupils. He will endeavour to the utmost to impart a good commercial education. The ordinary routine will include arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and mensuration; grammar and composition; ancient and modern history; geography, natural history, astronomy, Scripture, and drawing. Latin and the elements of Greek and French if required. Terms, five pounds per annum.

This will remind the reader of another advertisement, which appeared in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1736:

At Edial, *near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages by* Samuel Johnson.

In all these schools, he was a faithful scholar in the languages and in mathematics. The popular conception which represents him as uneducated is erroneous. Voluntary ignorance cannot quote his example.

The lad had always been of a serious character, given to books rather than to boyish play. Many tales are told of his conscientiousness, of his boldness in rebuking sin, of his calling his aunt (who was another mother in tender care, and in indulgence) and his brothers out to the barn, where he would seat them on the trusses of straw, while he would ascend the manger and preach to them. His moral thoughtfulness was marked by the family and even by visitors. When he was ten years old, Rev. Richard Knill visited Stambourne to preach for the London Missionary Society. That he was struck with the promise of the boy was not altogether strange; clergymen on a collecting tour are always much impressed by the high qualities of the children of their hosts. But the feelings of Mr. Knill took a more

definite form; he talked and prayed with the boy, and calling the family together, he laid his hands on the lad's head, and expressed his conviction that the young Spurgeon would preach the gospel to many thousands. Perhaps the prediction, as often, aided to produce its own fulfillment.

A celebrated passage in one of his early sermons seems to indicate that he was once in danger of falling into skepticism:

"There was an hour in which I slipped the anchor of my faith; I cut the cable of my belief; I no longer moored myself hard by the coast of revelation; I allowed the vessel to drift before the wind, and thus started on the voyage of infidelity."

But the state of unbelief thus portrayed must have been of very brief duration, though naturally, as he looked back upon it, it seemed the horror of thick darkness.

At length came the time when he was thoroughly aroused about his soul.

"Six months did I pray—prayed agonizingly with all my heart, and never had an answer. . . . I felt that I was willing to do anything and be anything if God would only forgive me."

At this time, the family were living in Colchester; but the father was preaching to a little church in Tollesbury. The Sunday was very stormy; Charles could not go to Tollesbury; his mother said:

"You had better go to-day to the Primitive Methodist Chapel."

The preacher in this chapel was a very plain, laboring man, who, on week days, planted cabbages and tended them. So few people were present that morning, that the preacher had decided not to preach; but his mind was changed.

Charles sat and waited; at last, a very thin, pale man went into the pulpit and gave out the text:

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." Then fixing his eyes on the trembling boy, he said: "Young man, you are in trouble. You will never get out of it unless you come to Christ." Then lifting his thin hands, he cried, "Look, *look*, LOOK; only *look*."

In an instant, the darkness was rolled away. In the evening, he went to the Baptist chapel, where he heard a sermon from the words, "Accepted in the beloved;" and he felt peace and an assurance of salvation. At night, when all others in the house had gone to bed, he told his father the story of the day.

The narrative of his blameless youth, of his prolonged agony, and of the final dawning of day, suggests more than one lesson. That, in order to be an eminent saint, one must first have been a flagrant sinner; that there is no such material for the Christian worker as the reclaimed prize fighter, the regenerate saloon keeper, or the reformed burglar,—all this is one of the Devil's lies.

If the gospel had been preached in Colchester as simply and plainly as it was later preached in the Tabernacle, the poor lad would have been spared months of suffering, of groping. Indeed, it is by no means certain but that he had already submitted to God, and that the gracious text, quoted by the plain preacher, merely revealed to himself that God had accepted him in the Beloved.

Young Spurgeon at once felt that he must profess his faith in the Saviour. His parents and all his ancestors had been Congregationalists. But after diligently reading the New Testament with prayer for guidance, he became convinced that there was no baptism save the immersion of a

believer upon the intelligent profession of his faith. In accordance with the spirit of religious liberty which his ancestors had brought from Holland, the father opposed no obstacle to the son's choice. Accordingly, on Friday, May 3, 1851, Charles walked from Newmarket (where he was then usher) to Isleham Ferry and was baptized by Pastor Cantlow.

The "Sword and Trowel" for April, 1890, contains an article from Mr. Spurgeon, entitled "Baptizing at Isleham Ferry," from which we quote:

In January, 1850, I was enabled, by divine grace, to lay hold on Jesus Christ as my Saviour. Being called, in the providence of God, to live at Newmarket as usher in a school, I essayed to join myself to the church of believers in that town; but according to my reading of Holy Scripture, the believer in Christ should be buried with him in baptism, and so enter upon his open Christian life. I cast about to find a Baptist minister, and I failed to find one nearer than Isleham, in the Fen country, where resided a certain Mr. W. W. Cantlow, who had once been a missionary in Jamaica, but was then pastor of one of the Isleham Baptist churches. My parents wished me to follow my own convictions, Mr. Cantlow arranged to baptize me, and my employer gave me a day's holiday for that purpose.

I can never forget the 3d of May, 1850; it was my mother's birthday, and I myself was within a few weeks of being sixteen years of age. I was up early, to have a couple of hours for quiet prayer and dedication to God. Then I had some eight miles to walk, to reach the spot where I was to be immersed into the Triune name according to the sacred command. It was by no means a warm day, and therefore all the better for the two or three hours of quiet foot-travel, which I enjoyed. The sight of Mr. Cantlow's smiling face was a full reward for that country tramp. I think I see the good man now, and the white ashes of the turf-fire by which we stood and talked together about the solemn exercise which lay before us.

We went together to the Ferry, for the Isleham friends

ISLEHAM FERRY.

had not degenerated to in-door immersion in a bath made by the art of man, but used the ampler baptistery of the flowing river.

Isleham Ferry, on the river Lark, is a very quiet spot, half a mile from the village, and rarely disturbed by traffic at any time of the year. The river itself is a beautiful stream, dividing Cambridgeshire from Suffolk. The ferry house, hidden in the picture by the trees, is freely opened for the convenience of minister and candidates at a baptizing. Where the barge is hauled up for repairs, the preacher takes his stand, when the baptizing is on a week-day, and there are few spectators present. But on Lord's day, when great numbers are attracted, the preacher, standing in a barge moored mid-stream, speaks the word to the crowds on both sides of the river. This can be done the more easily, as the river is not very wide. Where three persons are seen at a stand, is the usual place for entering the water. The right depth, with sure footing, may soon be found, and so the delightful service proceeds in the gently flowing stream. No accident or disorder has ever marred the proceedings. In the course of seven or eight miles, the Lark serves no fewer than five Baptist churches; and they would on no account give up baptizing out of doors.

To me there seemed to be a great concourse on that week-day. Dressed, I believe, in a jacket, with a boy's turn-down collar, I attended the service previous to the ordinance; but all remembrance of it has gone from me; my thoughts were in the water, sometimes with my Lord in joy, and sometimes with myself in trembling awe at making so public a confession. . . . It was a new experience to me, never having seen a baptism. . . . The wind came down the river with a cutting blast, as my turn came to wade into the flood; but after I had walked a few steps, and noted the people on the ferry boat, and in boats, and either shore, I felt as if heaven and earth and hell might gaze upon me; for I was not ashamed then and there to own myself a follower of the Lamb. Timidity was gone; I have scarcely met with it since. I lost a thousand fears in that river Lark, and found that in keeping his commandments there is great reward. It was a thrice happy day to me. God be praised for the preserving goodness which allows me to write with delight of it at the distance of forty years. . . .

If any ask, why was I thus baptized? I answer, because I believed it to be an ordinance of Christ, very specially joined by him with faith in his name. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." I had no superstitious idea that baptism would save me, for I was saved. I did not seek to have sin washed away by water, for I believed that my sins were forgiven me through faith in Christ Jesus. Yet I regarded baptism as the token to the believer of cleansing, the emblem of his burial with his Lord, and the outward avowal of his new birth. I did not trust in it; but because I trusted in Jesus as my Saviour, I felt bound to obey him as my Lord, and follow the example which he set us in Jordan, in his own baptism. I did not fulfill the outward ordinance to join a party and become a Baptist, but to be a Christian after the apostolic fashion, for they, when they believed, were baptized.

True, there was no saving efficacy in the outward ordinance; but who can doubt that the conscientious discharge of duty in the face of some obstacles was blessed in giving him that firmness in adherence to righteousness which was the keynote of his life?

As soon as he felt the joy of conversion, the lad desired to serve his Master by leading others to the fountain of life. He distributed tracts; he taught in the Sunday-school; he set copies for the boys, and thus gained entrance to their homes, where he gave away his tracts.

Upon going to Cambridge, he united himself with the church of which Robert Hall had been the brilliant and gifted preacher, and which now has as its pastor Mr. Tarn, one of Mr. Spurgeon's most successful students. He also joined the Lay-preachers' Association, and aided in conducting meetings in the villages near by. One evening, he was requested to go with a brother to the hamlet of Teversham, four miles away, as the brother who was to preach there was unused to the work, and would be much encouraged by the

THE COTTAGE IN WHICH MR. SPURGEON PREACHED HIS FIRST SERMON. Page 24.

presence of a Christian companion. Young Spurgeon promised, thinking that perhaps he would be asked to pray or to read the chapter. On the way, he said to his comrade:

"I hope you will be much blessed this evening in preaching."

"Oh, dear!" was the reply, "I never preached in my life; it is you that will preach; there will be no preaching unless you do."

Seeing no way of escape, he cast himself on God for help, and spoke, in the farm kitchen, to the handful of rustics, from the words of Peter, "To you, therefore, that believe, he is precious."

The people gazed in wonder at the boy in his round jacket and his broad turn-over collar. As he closed the sermon, an aged dame cried out:

"How old are you?"

"You must not ask questions now," he replied.

After the service was over, the eager inquiries were renewed: "How old are you?"

"Less than sixty."

"Less than sixty, indeed! Less than sixteen."

"Well, no matter how old I am; let us listen to the words of the Lord."

The name of the young preacher was soon widely known. His services were in demand in all the villages about Cambridge, though the worldly circumstances of the humble churches were such that his labors were recompensed only with a great deal of experience. Often the wants of the little congregation drew heavily on his sympathies and on his slender purse. He has related that once, of a rainy evening, after he had walked several miles to a village, he found that no one had ventured out; so, in his rubber

coat and with his lantern, he went from house to house, and cottage to cottage, inviting, urging the people to come and hear the gospel; and thus he gathered a little congregation.

Presently, in 1852, being then eighteen, he was invited to become the pastor of the small church in Waterbeach, an humble farming village in Essex. He at once accepted the call. He did not wait for a large field; he entered the field which Providence had opened. At once people were attracted by the young preacher. The little thatched chapel (which was burned in 1866) became crowded; people stood outside at the windows. Nor was it alone curiosity. The pastor was not satisfied to draw a crowd; he wanted conversions; and within the year of his labors the church grew from forty to a hundred. Through the entire community the effect of his labors was seen: drunkards became sober and profligates virtuous.

During this year of his pastorate at Waterbeach his father and other friends urged him to enter Regent's Park College, under the care of the justly eminent Dr. Joseph Angus, and to take a full course of literary and theological study. It was arranged that, while the President was on a visit to Cambridge, Mr. Spurgeon should meet him, at a given hour, at the house of Mr. Macmillan, the publisher. Each arrived at the time; by the error of a servant each was shown into a different room; neither knew of the nearness of the other. After an hour or two of waiting, each became weary, and each went his way.

On the same afternoon, as Mr. Spurgeon was walking across Cambridge on his way to preach in the neighborhood, he seemed to hear an audible voice pronouncing the words: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." He received the command as a message from God.

"I remembered my poor but loving people among whom I ministered and the souls who had been given me in my humble charge; and although at that time I anticipated obscurity and poverty as the result of my resolve, yet I did there and then renounce the offer of collegiate instruction, determining to abide, for a season at least, with my people, and to remain preaching the word as long as I had strength to do it." He wrote to his father:

"Unless you expressly command me, I shall not enter the College; I shall remain with the Waterbeach Church."

It is idle to speculate on what might have been; if we believe that the God of infinite wisdom and love guides us when we sincerely and humbly ask for guidance, we can hardly regard this incident as excepted from God's care. It is not easy to see how a course at Regent's Park or at either of the Universities, would have increased his spiritual power or his usefulness. But that he did not set at naught the value of consecrated mental discipline and acquirement was shown later in his establishment of a college for the education of ministers.

The church had in former times paid the minister from five pounds a year up to twenty-five pounds. At first, Mr. Spurgeon continued his labors as usher; but presently he gave up all else, and the church, with its increased strength, raised his salary to fifty pounds a year, or not far from nineteen shillings a week. Mr. Spurgeon once said to the writer:

"I paid twelve shillings a week for my rooms at Cambridge, and had left seven shillings for all other expenses; but the people, whenever they came to town, would bring potatoes, turnips, cabbages, apples, and sometimes a bit of meat; and so I managed to live."

"But once," he added, "I was very much in need of a hat; and hats did not grow on the farms at Waterbeach; so I said to the Lord, 'O Lord, I must be decent; I need a hat very much.' There was a man in the parish who was quite wealthy for a village, having several thousand pounds; but he was dreadfully penurious. He showed his parsimony years later, when he was dying. He had been in a chamber on the second story; but when he found that he was going to die, he managed to crawl down, with great pain, to the first floor, so that he might die there, and his estate might not have to pay a shilling for having his body carried down one flight of stairs. And further, to save church-yard fees, he left directions that his body should be buried in a corner of the garden.

"The Sunday noon after I had told the Lord about my need, this man very quietly called me to come with him behind the chapel. After looking around everywhere to see if we were alone, he said to me:

"'The Lord told me to give you seven and six. Here it is. And I want you to pray that I may be saved from covetousness.'

"So I bought a hat. The next Sunday, in the same secret way, he called me again to the rear of the chapel. I was at a loss to know what he could want this time. In great distress, he said:

"'Oh, dear! The Lord told me to give you ten shillings, but I kept back two and six, and I haven't slept a wink all the week; and here it is. Pray that I may not be lost.'

"The people were hospitable and generous beyond their means. For the fifty-two Sundays, I had fifty-six homes."

Every door stood open; the only question was who should have the privilege of entertaining him on his next weekly

visit. Meanwhile, the deacons and the more far-sighted of the members, after the manner of men, were divided between delight in their new welfare and forebodings as to their losing the (human) source of their prosperity. They felt but too surely in their prophetic souls that such a preacher could not long be monopolized by Waterbeach.

And all this time, Providence, while preparing the man for the field, was also preparing a field for the man. The New Park Street Church in London had enjoyed a most honorable history. It had maintained the truth, it had borne burdens and sufferings for Christ's sake and the gospel's, in the midst of defection; it had enjoyed the labors of a succession of holy men, one of whom, Benjamin Keach, had stood in the pillory for preaching the gospel. There was a great store of promises yet unfulfilled, of prayers not yet granted. But at present it seemed as if, humanly speaking, the future of the church lay wholly in the past. The chapel was not far from Southwark Bridge, in a part of Southwark that had become a most undesirable neighborhood, amid shabby houses and breweries. Thrale's historical brewery had been in this neighborhood. The chapel, built in more prosperous times for a congregation of twelve hundred, now rarely saw more than a hundred, though the church numbered two hundred. No doubt, as with all ancient churches, many of the members were advanced in years, and many had retained their connection, though they had removed to a distance. The few who remained were growing discouraged. No doubt in the prayer meeting, held in the dark and unventilated lecture room, the aged standard bearers used to dilate upon the past glories of Zion, and to extol the memory of the sainted Rippon, and the long-since departed Keach, and the venerated Gill, and the still sur-

viving Angus. How little they knew that a future lay just before the church, compared with which its past would fade and pale!

The pulpit was vacant, and they were anxiously looking for a man who should fill not only it, but the eleven hundred empty sittings.

There was a Sunday-school meeting at Cambridge. The speakers were two most respectable and rather dull divines and a young man; the latter spoke with the ardor and the imprudence which is apt to mark the men who are to make eras. He was rebuked by his seniors for his unguarded utterances. But there was a visitor from Essex, who no doubt was not a stranger to the growing reputation of the young preacher of Waterbeach. Struck with his address, he said to Deacon James Low, of the New Park Street Church, that he believed that in this youth of nineteen they would find the man they needed and prayed for. And thus it came about that in November, 1853, when Mr. Spurgeon reached Waterbeach Chapel one Sunday morning and took his seat in the "table pew" to select the hymns from Rippon's Watts, a letter was handed him. It was from Deacon Low, and was an invitation to come to London and preach on an early Lord's Day. Mr. Spurgeon read it, and handed it to a deacon, with the remark:

"It is, of course, a mistake; they would never think of inviting me; it must be meant for another minister of the same name."

"No," the deacon replied; "it is not a mistake; I knew that this would be the end of it; but I wonder that the Londoners have heard of you so quickly. Now, if it had been Cottenham, or St. Ives, or Huntingdon, I should not have wondered; but London!"

Mr. Spurgeon put the letter aside, and preached as usual, and next day wrote to London, explaining that the pastor at Waterbeach was but nineteen years old, and that the letter was evidently not intended for him. But a reply was received, saying that the church was aware of his age, and that the invitation was meant for him, and was renewed.

And so, on the appointed day, he went to London. He was entertained in a boarding house, still known as Burr's Hotel. Among the guests were several young men, who, as soon as they learned the errand on which he had come to the city, chaffed him, telling him about the great preachers in London, and by implication showing the madness of a young man from the country, with scanty education, dreaming of competing with them. As the result of this singularly wanton cruelty, the lad went to his room and bed with a heavy heart. Next morning, as he reached the chapel, he was awed by its size, and by the memory of the great men of the past. How could he stand in the pulpit where Gill and Rippon had stood?

But he gathered courage, and preached from James 1 : 17 : "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The congregation numbered about eighty. And these had been gathered with labor. During the previous week, the deacons had been drumming up a congregation. Among others, they had gone to Miss Susannah Thompson, daughter of Mr. Robert Thompson, saying:

"There is a young man from Essex coming to preach for us on Sunday. Do come and help to make a respectable show, so that he may not see how very few we are."

The young lady came; at night she came again. She will

appear more than once on these pages; her name will ever be associated with his.

The people in the morning were carried away by the young preacher. Apparently they spent much of the afternoon in telling of the marvelous sermon; in the evening, there were several hundred present. Never again would it be needful to work up an audience for Spurgeon. He preached from the words: "They are without fault before the throne of God," Rev. 14 : 5. The sermon deepened the impression made in the morning. After the service, the people lingered in the house, and would not be pacified without an assurance from the officials that Mr. Spurgeon should be invited to preach again. So he was asked to spend another Sunday at New Park Street as soon as possible. He would make no engagement before seeing the little church at Waterbeach.

On the way home that evening with one of the deacons, they stopped to hear a celebrated minister, toward the close of his discourse.

"Do they call that great preaching?" asked Mr. Spurgeon.

"Yes," replied the deacon.

"Then I can preach in London."

In the end, he preached every other Sunday for six weeks in London. Each Sunday increased the enthusiasm. An invitation, not unanimous, was given him to preach for six months. In his reply, he said:

"With regard to a six months' invitation from you, I have no objection to the length of time, but rather approve of the prudence of the church in wishing to have one so young as myself on an extended period of approbation. But I write after well weighing the matter, when I say positively that I cannot—I dare not—accept an unqualified

invitation for so long a time. . . . It ill becomes a youth to promise to preach to a London congregation so long, until he knows them, and they know him. I would engage to supply for three months of that time, and then, should the congregation fail, or the church disagree, I would reserve to myself liberty, without breach of engagement, to retire; and you would on your part have the right to dismiss me without seeming to treat me ill. Should I see no reason for so doing, and the church still retain their wish for me, I can remain the other three months, either with or without the formality of a second invitation. . . . I respect the honesty and boldness of the small minority, and only wonder that the number was not greater. . . . And now, one thing is due to every minister, and I pray you to remind the church of it, namely, that in private, as well as in public, they must all wrestle in prayer to God that I may be sustained in the great work."

Long before even the three months had passed, all question had ceased. There was no minority; the entire church called him to the pastorate. On Friday, April 28, 1854, he accepted the call, and at once entered the field which he was to leave only with his life.

In all this correspondence and the events connected with it, and in the story of his early life, several things may be remarked. One is the singular maturity and judgment of a lad of nineteen. He was neither bashful nor over-confident; he trusted in God and looked to him for success.

And there was an absence of seeking after a great place. To many young men, settled with a little country church, on a salary of fifty pounds, an invitation to London would have been an intoxication; and the only question would have been, "When does the first express start for London?" But

he put aside the first invitation as not meant for him. There was no eagerness; he believed, and did not make haste. Whether he had ever thought of a career, we do not know; but certainly he acted on the principle that the way to be prepared for a greater to-morrow is to do faithfully the small duty of to-day.

CHAPTER II.

NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL.

THE enthusiasm which had attended the three months of trial did not wane. The chapel was always crowded. "In the evenings, when the gas was burning, it was like the Black Hole of Calcutta." One evening in 1854, the preacher exclaimed:

"By faith the walls of Jericho came down; and by faith this wall at the back shall come down."

After the service an aged and prudent deacon, addicted to that mixture of self-satisfaction and indolence which we call "conservatism," exclaimed in rather domineering tones:

"Let us never hear of that again."

"What do you mean?" said the preacher. "You will hear no more about it when it is done; and therefore the sooner you set about doing it the better."

While the enlargement was in progress, February 11, 1855, to May 27, the church occupied Exeter Hall, in the Strand, holding two thousand five hundred to three thousand. But this too proved wholly inadequate. Often the crowd overflowed into the street. All London came to see what it was which drew all London. And what did all London see? They did not see, as they perhaps expected, a mountebank. Nor, on the other hand, did they see a man of clerical appearance (though in his early ministry, he wore the white neck-tie which later he discarded as a "white boiled rag.") They did not see (it is hardly necessary to

remark) a lord. The spectacle of a lord preaching the gospel would always draw an audience in England. Nor did they see a man crowned with the honors of the universities; but rather one who by his conscientious belief was excluded from the opportunities and privileges of Oxford and Cambridge. Nor did they hear doctrines softened down. Nor were the doctrines brought in as an incident. Rather the Puritan theology was stated in the boldest form, and made to stand out in almost repulsive bareness. And these doctrines were made the warp and woof of the sermon. After one of his celebrated Yale Lectures on Preaching, Mr. Beecher was asked a question about Mr. Spurgeon's Calvinism. He replied:

"Mr. Spurgeon does not owe anything to his Calvinism, anything more than the camel does to his hump." Mr. Spurgeon replied, in the "Sword and Trowel," by quoting from an eminent naturalist, who said, in substance:

"The camel's hump is indispensable to him. It is made up of fat, which supplies to him condensed nourishment through all of a long journey in the desert."

Mr. Beecher (so Mr. Spurgeon informed the writer) had the manliness to acknowledge the aptness of the reply.

What, then, did all London see? They saw a young man of twenty-one, only a year or two from the country, who was absolutely master of the situation, who was poised, self-possessed, recognized by an ancient church, and by cautious and conservative office-holders as the unquestioned leader.

He trod the platform as Nelson the quarter-deck. Marvelous success did not intoxicate him. He was not exalted, nor conceited; although, indeed, if he had shown signs of

conceit, one might well have remembered what old Dr. Samuel Johnson said:

"They talk about Garrick being conceited; but they must consider the circumstances. Why, if I had been flattered as much as Garrick, and as successful, I would have men go before me with long poles, when I went out on the street, to knock everybody down."

They saw a man as bold as Ney, as John Brown; who might have asked: "How does a man feel when he is afraid?" a man who did not fear to declare unpopular truth, who did not hesitate to take responsibility.

Yet, with all the courage of youth, he combined the wisdom of age. He made no mistakes. His common sense was gigantic. The smart and spiteful, and therefore foolish sayings attributed to him were pure inventions. Once he was asked if he really uttered the *mot* attributed to him by all the paragraphers:

"Resist the devil and he will flee from you; resist the deacons and they will fly at you."

"No," he replied, "I never had the wit to originate it nor the experience to justify it; and it has been ascribed to others hundreds of years before I was born."

On the contrary, he had great things to accomplish, and he would not peril them by alienating, for the sake of an epigram, those whose help was indispensable. And he always spoke of his deacons and of his friends with enthusiastic affection: "no one ever had such friends as I."

They saw a man who believed what he said; to whom everything that he taught was intensely real. The doctrines were alive; he made them breathe and pulsate. They were not weapons to be furbished up for their own sake alone, and then laid aside. They were to control the

life. Religion was not something to be put in one's iron safe, along with his other fire insurance policies, and looked at once a week. It was to control every moment of the life. Repentance was not merely an exercise preliminary to joining the church; it meant leaving off every wrong practice; it meant, as in actual instances, for the thief to restore his spoils.

The Bible was not a book to be laid away in decorous and dusty disuse, nor was it a book to be read as a task, hateful but unavoidable. Rather the Bible was a book to be read, to be believed, to be obeyed, to be enjoyed, a counsellor in perplexity, a solace in trial.

They saw a man who was master of that great gift, the plainest and simplest Anglo-Saxon speech, who preached with the single aim that all should understand, whether they would or not. He did not preach about "the drift of current theological thought," or about "a parallel between Paul's Epistles and the Dialectics of Aristotle," or about "the primordial germ," or about "the alleged use of two-tined forks among the prehistoric races." He had no literary or professional ambition. He used the English of Bunyan and of Abraham Lincoln.

They saw a man who spoke directly to the soul, who seemed to look into the heart of each person in the thousands before him, and talked with him as if the two were absolutely alone in the spiritual world. Once the writer heard him close a sermon in something like these words:

"Will you accept Christ?" "Well, I will think about it." "That is not the question. Will you accept Christ?" "I will go home and pray." "No, that is not the question. Will you accept Christ?" "I will leave off swearing." "No, that is not the question; *will you accept Christ?*"

And he pressed the question, till it seemed that no one in the great congregation could avoid deciding then and there the issue of eternity.

They saw a man preaching twice a week, and often three times, to his own people, and perhaps a dozen times abroad. He never used old sermons, never repeated himself in prayer or sermon. There was always infinite variety.

They heard a voice which was perhaps the most wonderful and effective ever given to a public speaker, which was not vociferous to those near at hand, while yet it was distinctly heard by five, or ten, or even twenty thousand. It was a voice that had the singular quality of ringing in one's ears years after it has been heard, especially when it was instinct with deep, passionate feeling. The writer remembers hearing him give this notice:

"You will find petitions in the other end of the house against the opium traffic in India and China; I hope you will all sign them. For a government to carry on dram shops for the sake of the profit is inexcusable; but that the government should carry on poison shops is utterly abominable."

Eleven years have passed; but as we write, we seem to hear once more those tones of indignant, burning humanity. And he had this voice perfectly in control; he effected, what is one of the rarest achievements of a public speaker, a tone of familiar, yet elevated conversation, a conversation addressed to the great congregation.

When he prayed, it was evident that he trod a path which was familiar to his feet. There were the loftiest sentiments expressed in the simplest language. There was the devotion of the closet carried into the pulpit, lifting up the souls of the great multitude. There was not the awe which

sometimes characterizes prayer; still less was there that fear which is cast out by perfect love. Perhaps he was pleading for more of the love of God:

"Some of us have only stood on the brink of this great river; some of us have but touched our feet in the stream; some of us have waded up to our ankles; with some the waters have come breast-high."

Or, again, he would say:

"O Lord, take us and mold us as the clay, though there is so much grit in us that it must hurt thy fingers."

There was much that might be startling to one accustomed to the rhythm and order and propriety—(shall we say conventionalism?)—of the Book of Common Prayer. Yet few persons, while listening to Mr. Spurgeon, would feel the need of a prayer book.

When he read from the Scripture, it was no longer a volume two or three thousand years old; it became a new book. Every verse was instinct with life. His running comments were rich and suggestive, and were as well worthy publication as his sermons.

To hear him read a psalm and comment upon it was an event. He had passed through deep waters; he had borne burdens. These things help a man to see into the Psalms, make them real to him. The late Francis Wayland, in speaking of Calvin's Commentary on the Psalms, once said, "Calvin had been through persecution, sickness, loneliness, danger, exile. All these things rub the Psalms into a man."

Of course, the newspapers soon became aware of what was going on, and of a good deal that was not going on. Their first impulse was to hold him up to ridicule as a mountebank, and, at odd hours, to invent ridiculous stories about him.

Gradually, however, the conviction forced itself upon them that he was a spiritual power; it did not make very great odds; they could not ignore him. Every mention only increased the number who could not get into the congregation.

When the newspapers said that he slid down the pulpit banisters and then painfully climbed up again, to show how easy is backsliding and how difficult is recovery (and this at a time when there were no banisters and no stairs in sight, the pulpit being reached by stairs from the rear), people came to see the stairs, and remained to pray and to be saved.

To the comic papers, here was a harvest not to be neglected. They swarmed with caricatures, though often, indeed, these caricatures were an indirect commendation. One caricature gives a pair of portraits labeled respectively "Brimstone" and "Treacle." The former is a young man of plain and unprofessional appearance, who is speaking without grace, his arms extended wide, but with the utmost earnestness; the other represents a divine in full canonicals, with his hair accurately parted and brushed, a white handkerchief beside the sermon on the cushion, who is reading his manuscript with an easy and self-satisfied simper.

In one instance the editor of a comic paper called to see Mr. Spurgeon and said to him:

"We want you to understand that we have no personal feeling, and that we publish these things merely to make the paper sell."

All these caricatures Mr. Spurgeon collected and put into an album, enjoying many a laugh over them.

The enlarged chapel in New Park Street seated eighteen hundred; but to put the constantly growing congregation back into the chapel was like trying to crowd the chicken back into the shell. So it was needful to return to Exeter Hall.

But the proprietors of the hall were unwilling for so long a time to let it to one church. A fund was started for the erection of a new house; and in the meantime the Music Hall in Surrey Gardens, just completed, was engaged for Sunday evenings, with some misgivings at the greatness of the undertaking. Here, on the evening of Sunday, October 6, seven thousand persons were assembled, and the pastor had begun his prayer, when an alarm was started, as is supposed, by some miscreants acting in concert. A panic arose; every one crowded to the doors; the passages became choked; seven persons lost their lives, and twenty-eight were seriously injured. The nervous shock to Mr. Spurgeon was so severe as for several weeks to prevent him from preaching.

It is almost incredible; but while he was suffering the utmost distress from the deplorable accident, for which, of course, he was no more responsible than Queen Victoria, some of the London papers had the injustice and inhumanity to attack him savagely and to hold him up to reproach by associating him with the calamity. Said one paper:

> We would place in the hand of every right-thinking man a whip to scourge from society the authors of such vile blasphemies as on Sunday night, above the cries of the dead (*sic*) and the dying, and louder than the wails of misery from the maimed and suffering, resounded from the mouth of Mr. Spurgeon in the Music Hall of the Surrey Gardens.

It is gratifying to add that the paper has since become better informed, and has been most favorable to Mr. Spurgeon and his work.

To avoid any such liability in the future, it was decided to hold services in the Music Hall only in the morning, though the evening was far more favorable to large audiences. Of course, all these events made more urgent and

obvious the need for the new building. The fund steadily increased by the free will offerings of the poor and of the more wealthy. A site was selected in Newington Butts, so called because, in the olden time, here were set up the butts or targets for archery practice. Here also, on the very site, in former times, Baptists had been burned at the stake for their faith. The site is just across the way from "The Elephant and Castle," a well-known, or rather widely-known tavern.

It was a great undertaking for a church having very small wealth to build a house to hold six thousand persons, and costing thirty thousand pounds, and to offer it to God free from debt. But by this time the people had become inspired with something of the faith and boldness of the pastor; and they had learned from him the might of prayer. The prayers of the people came before God along with their alms. In the words of Mr. Stead:

"Every man, woman, and child in the church, who had accepted the finished work of Christ, and had become a member of the Church Militant below, became, as it were, not merely a partner with God Almighty, but a son, a brother of Jesus Christ, who supported them in the midst of all the sordid cares and troubles of their daily life, and who, having loved them with an everlasting love, would guide their footsteps every day and who would keep them unto the end.

"So far from regarding Mr. Spurgeon primarily as a great preacher, it will be more helpful for those who seek, to find the secret of his success in his power of prayer. It was much more praying than preaching that made Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Spurgeon; which made this Essex bumpkin a name

and a power which tells for righteousness in every corner of the English-speaking world."

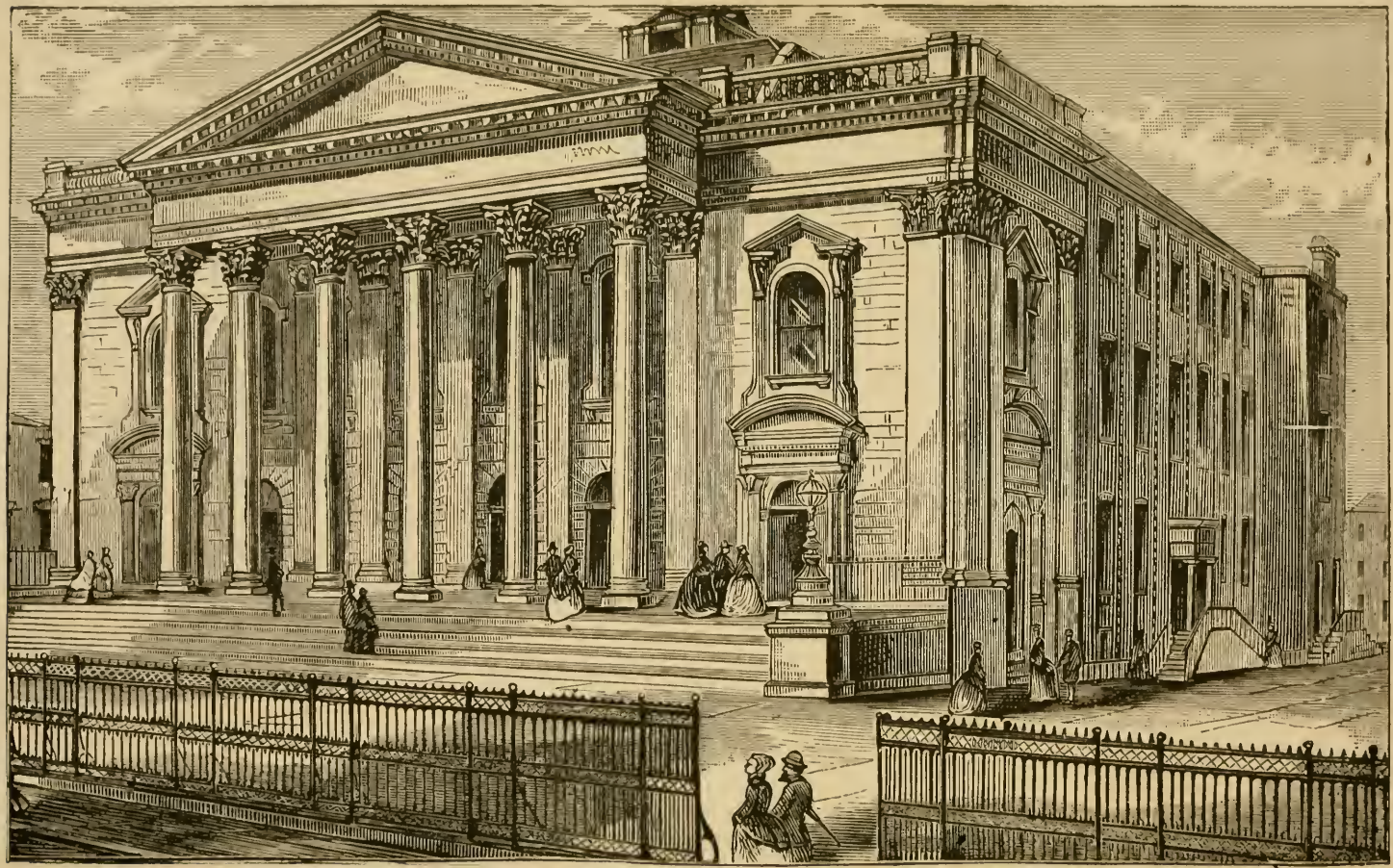
The Metropolitan Tabernacle stands as a monument to the power of faith and prayer.

Over and over, during the work of building, man's extremity proved God's opportunity. A friend in Bristol, who had never heard Mr. Spurgeon, sent five thousand pounds. Another friend loaned twenty thousand pounds in securities which the pastor could use as collaterals if he needed to borrow money.

The corner-stone was laid, August 16, 1859. In December, 1859, the church ceased meeting in the Music Hall, as the proprietors had decided to open it on Sunday evenings for amusement. Once more the meetings were held in Exeter Hall, from December 18, 1859, till the Tabernacle was occupied, March 1, 1861.

It was during the occupancy of the Music Hall that a remarkable letter appeared in the London "Times," which was known to proceed from an eminent man of letters, and which attracted much attention. The writer described his own prejudices, and the slow steps by which he had been persuaded to go to the hall to hear "the Calvinist, the Baptist." He continues:

"Fancy a congregation of ten thousand souls, streaming into the hall, mounting the galleries, humming, buzzing, swarming,—a mighty hive of bees,—eager to secure, at first, the best places, and at last any place at all. After waiting half an hour—if you wish to have a seat you must be there at least that space of time in advance—Mr. Spurgeon ascended his tribune. To the hum and rush and trampling of men succeeded a low concentrated thrill and murmur of devotion, which seemed to run at once like an electric



THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

current through the breast of every one present; and by this magnetic chain the preacher held us fast for about two hours. . . . It is enough to say of his voice, that its power and volume are sufficient to reach every one in that vast assembly; of his language, that it is neither high-flown nor homely; of his style, that it is at times familiar, at times declamatory, but always happy, and often eloquent; of his doctrine, that neither the Calvinist nor the Baptist appears in the forefront of the battle which is waged by Mr. Spurgeon with relentless animosity, and with gospel weapons, against irreligion, cant, hypocrisy, pride, and those secret bosom sins which so easily beset a man in daily life; and to sum up all in a word, it is enough to say of the man himself that he impresses you with a perfect sense of his sincerity. . . . Here is a man not more Calvinist than many an incumbent of the Established Church who 'humbles and mumbles' as old Latimer says, over his liturgy and text,—here is a man who says the complete immersion, or something of that kind, of adults is necessary to baptism. These are his faults of doctrine; but if I were the examining chaplain of the Archbishop of —— I would say, 'May it please your Grace, here is a man able to preach eloquently; able to fill the largest church in England with his voice, and, what is more to the purpose, with people. And may it please your Grace, here are two churches in the metropolis, St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. What does your Grace think of inviting Mr. Spurgeon, this heretical Calvinist and Baptist, who is able to draw ten thousand after him, just to try his voice some Sunday morning, in the nave of either of those churches?'"

If this suggestion had been adopted, and if the spirit of it had obtained, many years would have been added to the

duration of the Establishment, and many souls would have heard the word of life; but either wisdom or love or boldness was wanting.

Providentially the church was saved from the curse of similar enterprises—an aspiring architect and a desire to erect something that shall be "a credit to the neighborhood." No doubt Mr. Spurgeon had a hand in the management, of whom the "Spectator" justly says:

"He could give away like a prince; but he had the faculty, often so painfully absent from the clergy, whether Established or Nonconformist, of managing large pecuniary affairs. Thousands might be given him, and it was certain . . . that he would spend the money wisely, would waste none on 'fads,' and would have as clear a result for his cash as if he had been a shopkeeper buying stock."

Throughout, faith and common sense wonderfully kept step. The church records have this entry, January 6, 1861, signed by the pastor and the deacons:

"This church needs rather more than four thousand pounds to enable it to open the New Tabernacle free of all debt. It humbly asks this temporal mercy of God, and believes that for Jesus' sake the prayer will be heard and the boon bestowed."

Mr. Spurgeon would not enter the house till it was free of debt. May 6, of the same year, there appears the following entry:

"We, the undersigned, members of the church lately worshiping in New Park Street Chapel, but now assembling in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, desire with overflowing hearts to make known and record the loving-kindness of our faithful God. We asked in faith; but the Lord has exceeded our desires, for not only was the whole

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sum given us, but far sooner than we had looked for it. Truly the Lord is good and worthy to be praised. . . . To Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we offer praise and thanksgiving, and we set our seal that God is true."

The building complete cost thirty-one thousand three hundred and thirty-two pounds, four shillings, ten pence, about one hundred and fifty-three thousand dollars. It has a main hall with room for six thousand without excessive crowding, a lecture room holding nine hundred, a school room holding one thousand, six class rooms, kitchen, lavatory, and retiring rooms, ladies' working room, young men's class room, secretary's room, three vestries, for pastor, deacons, and elders, and three store rooms.

As the raising of the money was an act of faith and prayer, so the same spirit prevailed in the erection and completion of the building. One evening, while the work was under way, after the workmen had gone, Mr. Spurgeon with Deacon Cook kneeled amid the piles of brick and planks, asking that God would give prosperity to the work of building, would preserve the lives of the men employed, and would make the house when completed a blessing. All the prayers were abundantly granted. The first service held in the Tabernacle, March 18, 1861, was a prayer meeting, led by the pastor, at which more than a thousand were present.

The first sermon was preached by the pastor, Monday, March 25. On the following day, there was a public meeting, at which Sir Henry Havelock Allan (son of Gen. Henry Havelock) presided. On the following day a meeting was held, which was addressed by representatives of various evangelical denominations. Other meetings followed, at one of which Rev. John Spurgeon, the pastor's father, presided.

And now, with new facilities, with new courage, with a new degree of faith built on God's fulfilled promises, with an army of helpers flushed with confidence in God, began a new era in Mr. Spurgeon's ministry.

For the sake of unity, we have omitted many events which in order of time belong to the years 1854–1861.

In the fall of 1854, a sermon upon "Harvest Time" attracted much attention, and when published, had a large circulation. Another sermon followed on "God's Providence." The success of these printed sermons led to the weekly issue, beginning January, 1855, of "The New Park Street Pulpit," afterwards changed to "The Metropolitan Pulpit."

For thirty-seven years the issue has continued, each number containing one sermon (sometimes two). This enterprise has added greatly to the labors of Mr. Spurgeon. Every sermon as reported was carefully revised by him on Monday, and then the proof corrected on Tuesday. But the increased usefulness paid for the labor. The sermons have had a circulation of twenty-five thousand weekly, though sometimes rising much higher. They have been scattered in every continent and every land. They have been reprinted in volumes, in newspapers and in magazines beyond number. Reports of conversions resulting from the reading of the sermons came from America, from Canada, from Australia, from New Zealand, from the mines, from the sea, from the prison, from the hospital. In many instances, the sermons were adopted by clergymen of the Anglican Church, who have recorded a marked increase of interest in their congregations.

In July, 1855, Mr. Spurgeon visited Scotland. His name had preceded him, and he was welcomed with intense and

universal enthusiasm, preaching the same gospel which had thundered from the pulpit of Knox.

On the evening of September 4, of the same year, he preached in the open air in Hackney to twelve thousand people, on "Heaven and Hell."

In 1857, upon the Day of Fasting for the disasters in India, he preached in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham to an audience estimated at twenty to twenty-four thousand.

In 1856, he was present at the jubilee of his grandfather, Rev. James Spurgeon, pastor at Stambourne, and preached; perhaps giving occasion for the venerable man to repeat once more:

"My grandson can preach the gospel better than I can; but he cannot preach a better gospel."

On January 8, 1856, Mr. Spurgeon was married to Miss Susannah Thompson, the lady who, as stated in a previous chapter, was persuaded to go to the New Park Street Chapel to help make an audience to greet the strange minister from Essex, and who, as we write, mourns for the kindest of husbands and the noblest of men, amid a sympathy such as was never exceeded in its depth and tenderness and universality.

CHAPTER III.

THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

THUS he began a ministry which, whether we consider its circumstances, its results, or the mental and moral traits which it evidenced, has no parallel. The congregations, overflowing at first, continued to tax the great house. To the end of Mr. Spurgeon's life, the only question as to a congregation was: "How many will the house contain? How many will his voice reach?"

But we are interrupted by the criticism of those who hold that the popular judgment is necessarily false, and that they have pronounced the severest and most crushing condemnation of a ministry or a sermon when they have said: "It is popular; it is sensational." They would be pleased if the Revisers had written in the margin opposite the clause, "The common people heard him gladly," the annotation, "Many good manuscripts omit these words." An Anglican rector said to Rev. C. H. Woolston: "Spurgeon has been a curse; he has been so sensational."

But, before we condemn a ministry because it is popular and sensational, it is worth while to ask, "Upon what was the popularity based? Did the preacher modify his utterances to please the populace? Did he dilute or adulterate the gospel? Did he sacrifice truth? What was the character of the sensations? And were they mere sensations, or did they lead to action? And, if to action, to what action?

No one can deny that Mr. Spurgeon preached Calvinism

without omitting or softening a single feature. He did not call sin by mild names. He did not cover the bottomless pit. Over and over again, he distinctly and consciously periled his popularity and stood ready, for the sake of what he regarded as truth, to break with his supporters and his best friends, both without and within the denomination.

His preaching did create a sensation. Alas, if it had not! All preaching that is preaching creates a sensation, from Isaiah and Jonah down to Edwards and Whitefield, and Finney and Spurgeon. Herein lies the difference between a "study" and a "sermon." A study informs the mind; a sermon informs but also moves to action. Mr. Spurgeon's discourses were sermons.

They moved the conscience; they led men to Christ. In 1854, the church numbered 313; the following year, 595; the next year, 860; in 1857, 1,046; and so it continued until in 1875, it numbered 4,813. Had no members been lost by death and otherwise in the meantime, it would have numbered 8,000. In 1886, the deacons found, on examining the church records, that the number received as converts by Mr. Spurgeon, not including those by letter, was 10,809.

"And I only wish," said Mr. Spurgeon, in mentioning this fact, "that it had been twenty thousand."

By the time of his death, the number was increased by several thousands. And if to these were added the great army led to Christ by reading his sermons, or by hearing them from other pulpits, how are the words of our Lord fulfilled: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

As to the character of those whom he gathered into the church, it is attested by the tender and sympathizing love which prevailed between pastor and people, by the constant

acts of benevolence and sacrifice with which they answered his calls upon them, and by the Spirit of devotion which pervaded the prayer meetings.

But perhaps it is implied that his preaching was adapted to catch the ear of the ignorant only.

Francis Wayland, about 1857, wrote to his son:

I have been reading several sermons in Spurgeon's new volume. I am struck with several things; first, the manifest truthfulness of the man, arising from his perfect belief in all that he says. The truths of religion are as much a verity to him as his own existence. Second, his intimate acquaintance with the whole Bible. It bubbles up everywhere as soon as he begins to speak. He uses it with great power to express his own ideas. Third, as a result of this, is his manner of making a sermon. He does not draw an abstract idea out of the text, but expands and illustrates the very text itself. It opens to him a train, or several trains of thought, which he illustrates from everything around him. It is owing to this that he has so great variety. Were he to deduce abstract propositions, he would of necessity often repeat himself. Fourth, he takes the very range of the thoughts of his hearers. They therefore all follow him. And then again, while he is accused of egotism, he seems to me to forget himself and his reputation more than any man I know of. He seems not to care what people say of him or do to him, if he can only convert them.

In 1867, General Garfield, who was elected President in 1880, attended the Tabernacle and wrote in his journal ("Century Magazine," 1883):

I did not intend to listen to Spurgeon as to some *lusus naturae*, but to try to discover what manner of man he was, and what was the secret of his power. . . . At half-past eleven Spurgeon came in, and at once offered a short, simple, earnest prayer, and read and helped the whole congregation to sing Watts' stirring hymn:

There is a land of pure delight.

For the first time in my life I felt some sympathy with the doctrine that would reject instrumental music from church worship. There must have been five thousand voices joining in the hymn. The whole building was filled and overflowed with the strong volume of song. The music made itself felt as a living, throbbing presence, that entered your nerves, brain, heart, and filled and swept you away in its resistless current.

After the singing, he read a chapter of Job, and then a contrasted passage from Paul, both relating to life and death. He accompanied his reading with familiar and sensible, sometimes expositional, comments; then followed another hymn, a longer prayer, a short hymn, and then the sermon from a text in the chapter he had read in Job 14 : 14, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." He evidently proceeded upon the assumption that the Bible, all the Bible, in its very words, phrases, and sentences, is the word of God; and that a microscopic examination of it will reveal ever-opening beauties and blessings. All the while, he impresses you with that, and also with the living fullness and abundance of his faith in the presence of God and the personal accountability of all to him. An unusual fullness of belief in these respects seems to me to lie at the foundation of his power. Intellectually he is marked by his ability to hold with great tenacity, and pursue with great persistency any line of thought he chooses. He makes the most careful and painstaking study of the subject in hand. No doubt fully as much of his success depends upon his labor, as upon his force of intellect. He has chosen the doctrines and the literature of the Bible as his field, and does not allow himself to be drawn aside. He rarely wanders into the fields of poesy, except to find the stirring hymns which may serve to illustrate his theme. He uses Bible texts and incidents with great readiness and appropriateness, and directs all his power, not toward his sermon, but toward his hearers. His arrangement is clear, logical, and perfectly comprehensible; and at the end of each main division of the sermon, he makes a personal application of the truth developed, to his hearers, and asks God to bless it. His manner is exceedingly simple and unaffected. He does not appear to be aware that he is doing a great thing, and I could see no indication that his success has turned his head.

He has the word-painting power quite at his command, but uses it sparingly. I could see those nervous motions of the hands and feet which all forcible speakers make when preparing to speak; and also in the speaking, the sympathy between his body and his thoughts which controlled his gestures, and produced those little touches of theatrical power, which are so effective in a speaker. . . .

Every good man ought to be thankful for the work Spurgeon is doing. I could not but contrast this worship with that I saw a few days ago at Westminster Abbey. In that proud old mausoleum of kings, venerable with years and royal pride, the great organ rolled out its deep tones, and sobbed and thundered its grand music, mingled with the intoning of the hired singers. Before the assembly of rich and titled worshipers, sat a choir of twenty persons. The choir boys in their white robes had been fighting among the tombs and monuments of the nave just before the service began. However devout and effective their worship may be, it is very costly, and must be confined, to a great extent, to the higher classes. I felt that Spurgeon had opened an asylum where the great untitled, the poor and destitute of this great city, could come and find their sorrows met with sympathy; their lowliness and longings for a better life touched by a large heart and an undoubted faith. God bless Spurgeon! He is helping to work out the problem of religious and civil liberty for England, in a way he knows not of.

The following is the record of the impressions made by a visit in 1881, and in 1886:

April 3, 1881.—The service was to begin at eleven. One of the doorkeepers told me that if I would wait a little while, I should be given a seat. With a view to enlisting him in my behalf in the matter of a seat, I offered him a shilling, which he declined, saying, "We do not do that here." You might have knocked me down with the smallest pin-feather. All over the kingdom, the officials of the richest church in Christendom stand with outstretched palm, ready to receive shillings and sixpences for showing the people the churches

built with the people's own money, while this plain laboring man, in a church paid for by the pennies of working men and working women, refuses a shilling. The friendly and non-shilling-accepting doorkeeper directed me to an elderly man (Mr. Edward Bonstead, now deceased) who kindly gave me a very eligible seat in his pew in the first gallery, which is on a level with the pulpit, from which I could see and hear everything. This gentleman, a member of the church and a pew holder, was most hospitable throughout this and a later visit to England, always reserving for me a seat, as long as possible. At five minutes before eleven one of the ushers clapped his hands, and at once strangers took any seats they could find. A moment or two after eleven, Mr. Spurgeon came down the steps from his study, toward the pulpit, walking with some difficulty, and leaning upon the ends of the pews. While you would hardly select him as a man of mark, yet his appearance is much more prepossessing than I expected. None of the pictures do him justice. There was none of the heaviness usually seen in the portraits. The most admirable thing of all was the entire naturalness, the unconscious forgetfulness of self.

He read Romans 5 with running comments, brief and admirable.

The prayer—it is difficult to sit in judgment on a prayer; but I may say that for sweetness and simplicity, and sympathy, and depth of experience, and closeness of intercourse with God and forgetfulness of the presence of anybody else, I have never heard anything surpassing it.

The sermon was from Romans 5 : 15 : "Not as the offence, so also is the free gift." The old doctrine of Justification by Faith was made new and living, not by any novel statement, but by freshness and vividness of experience and

application, illustrating the truth, that if the doctrines seem to us worn out, it is because we have ceased to experience them.

At the close of the service, I asked one of the deacons if Mr. Spurgeon cared to see any one after preaching. He said Mr. Spurgeon was usually so tired that he thought he would not. So I gave the deacon my card, just as a mark of respect, to let Mr. Spurgeon know that I had been there; and I was going out, when I was called back and told that Mr. Spurgeon wanted to see me. He received me, an entire stranger, most cordially. In personal intercourse, he was as winning and as simple as in the pulpit. He said very simply, speaking of it as a plain matter of fact, "I am almost worn out." I urged his being absent for six months or a year. He said, "They are talking about that; but it is hard to do it. There is so much on my hands; and when I am away the money does not come in." I was distressed to see the marks of overwork and of too early age.

On the afternoon of the same day I attended St. Paul's. There were perhaps one thousand persons present, seated in a portion of the immense nave. The introductory service, which is known, I believe, distinctly as worship, lasted an hour. Of this service, I heard distinctly six words. Of the sermon, by Canon Liddon, an elderly, fine-looking man, I heard perhaps one-fifth, and that by the most watchful attention.

St. Paul's cost originally seven hundred and forty thousand pounds, which, in the seventeenth century, represented two or three times that amount now. Enlargements and repairs have swelled the cost to millions of pounds. I do not know how much it costs annually to run it; but it takes one dean, four canons, thirty prebendaries, twelve minor canons,

and six vicars, besides an army of singers and other officials. All this to enable a thousand people not to hear. The Tabernacle cost thirty thousand pounds. I will not enlarge upon the comparison.

On Thursday evening, April 14, I found perhaps one thousand five hundred at the Tabernacle. The sermon was from Colossians 3 : 15 : "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

It was not a "talk," such as some ministers, in some distant continents, or in some other planet, might give on a week-day evening. It was a consecutive train of thought and feeling, and struck me as showing more power than the Sunday sermon. I will give the plan, from the scrap of paper which Mr. Spurgeon afterward, at my request, gave me.

COLOSSIANS 3 : 15.

The prevalence of trouble, quarreling, discontent, disquietude.

Is it the East Wind? Is it a low state of grace?

Oh, that we knew a remedy for it! Pills for the earthquake. We have no empiric here, but the good Physician.

I. *Possess the peace of God.*

1. Peace with God by Christ, as to spirituals.
2. Peace with God, as to all providences.
3. Peace, such as God commands and approves.
4. Peace, such as he works in the soul.
5. Peace, perfect, lasting, deep, divine.

II. *Let it occupy the throne.*

1. There must be rule, to be peace.
2. Call for its power to put down all turbulence.
3. Yield to its umpireship.
4. Let its power be constant.
5. Especially over the affections.

III. *Strengthen yourself with arguments.*

1. You can only so be yourself happy in heart.
2. Only thus can the church prosper.
3. Only thus can God be glorified.
4. To this ye are called.
5. Ye are one body.
6. Cast yourself upon God and see that peace he works.

IV. *Occupy your mind healthily.*

1. With thankfulness to God.
2. With thankfulness to others.
3. With a general amiability.

The sermon was textual rather than topical, though it partook of both characters. Mr. Spurgeon let himself out a little more than he does on Sundays, gave a little more play to his sympathies, and spoke rather more familiarly. At one or two points there was an audible smile, as when he spoke of persons who ascribed their troubles to the east wind, and when he said, in allusion to the need of rule, in order to have peace, "A great many persons have been much troubled this week, in making out the census papers, to know who was the head of the family."

He brought out, without any pedantry, the force of the word rendered *rule* as meaning to *act as umpire*. The peace of God is to settle all disputed questions in the soul. This was just at the time of the war with the Boers; and he spoke very strongly of the love of war and of the cry of many Britons, "Cut up the Dutch; cut the Boers; there is no glory unless we wade up to the waist in blood."

One of the deacons told me that when Mr. Spurgeon began this Thursday evening service there were a few hundred in attendance, but gradually the attendance is increasing. This result is not accomplished by scolding those who come,

because others do not come, but by another method, on which I am not sure there is any patent.

Rev. Brooks Lambert, M. A., of the Established Church, has recently been preaching, on Sunday evenings, at Bishopsgate Church, a series of lectures on "The Church and Dissent; or, Dissent from a Churchman's Point of View." In alluding to the Baptists, he spoke of Bunyan, of Carey, who inaugurated missions, and of "Spurgeon, who, whatever else might be said about him, has revolutionized modern preaching."

Sept. 26, 1886.—To-day found me in the Tabernacle. Mr. Spurgeon was looking well, and his voice is, as ever, full, strong, rich. He read Psalm 30, and his comments were delightful. As he comments, you say: "Yes, that is in the verse plain enough; I wonder that I never saw it before;" but you never did, you know. Thus, on verse 1, "I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up," he said, "When God lifts us up, we ought to lift him up; if he is our physician, we ought to pay him the fee of our praise." On verse 4, "Sing praises unto the Lord, O ye saints of his," "The good man does not feel that his own voice is enough; he wants *all* to praise God." Verse 5, "His anger is but for a moment; . . . weeping may endure for the night," etc.; "Be patient, you that are in the night; the morning will soon be here; God does let out his anger toward his children sometimes, as the tender father toward an erring child; but it is not a killing anger." Verse 6, "I said in my prosperity I shall never be moved;" "Very foolish in you, David; but that is the way with us all." Verse 7, "Thou didst hide thy face, I was troubled"; "That child of God who is not troubled when God hides his face, is in a bad way." Verse 8, "I cried unto thee, O Lord;" "Prayer comes in well at all times, when

you see God, and when you do not see him." Verse 11, "Thou hast loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness;" "A wonderful expression; God did not gird him with the *emblem* of gladness, but with gladness itself; our sorrows are only seeming; our joys are real." Verse 12, "To the end that," etc. "See what is the purpose for which God gives you a joyful mind; that you may praise him." "*My* God;" "You must have a *personal* knowledge of God or else you will never praise him aright."

Then he read Psalm 39. Verse 2, "I was dumb with silence;" "That is just like us; when we try to do a right thing, we overdo it, and make it a wrong thing; it was right to keep his mouth with a bridle; it was wrong to be dumb." Verse 4, "Lord, make me," etc.; "When he did speak, it was not to men, but to God." Verse 7, "What wait I for?" "Yes, that is the question; what am I waiting and looking for?" "My hope is in *thee*." "Happy man!" Verse 8, "Deliver me from all my transgressions;" "They are my worst enemies, my greatest danger." Verse 9, "I was dumb;" "Sometimes it is a good thing for a child of God to be dumb; but it is a better thing to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'" Verse 12, "I am a stranger with thee;" "Not a stranger *to* thee; God and I are both strangers in this world; God is a stranger in the world which he has made."

I think I never heard any one else read the Scripture and comment on it as he does. You feel that, from this time, that passage will be a new chapter to you; that there will be new light on it as often as you open to it.

The morning sermon was from Job 30 : 23: "I know that thou wilt bring me to death," etc. Among the points were these: We have here a piece of personal knowledge,

the certainty of death; and a piece of holy intelligence: *Thou* wilt bring me to death; God will be with us in death; and if he brings us to death, he will bring us to life again. How we may be freed from the fear of death. Let us be humble; let us be diligent. These are awful words; but they are the words of Jesus, and therefore I must quote them: "In hell, he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." There is no nonsense here about "the larger hope." These are the words of one who loved you more than these philosophers do.

After the sermon, I went in to have a moment with the honored preacher. He had noticed me in the audience and was expecting me. He said, "You are quite large enough to be seen with the naked eye." Nothing could be more kind than his greeting. He had been hard at work now since March; he will go away in November to escape the fog. He gave me the welcome news that Mrs. Spurgeon is much better. The Lord has heard the many loving prayers offered for her by the thousands who have been blessed by the labor of her hands and heart and head.

In the evening, as in the morning, he gave notice of the church meetings; of a meeting to give thanks for the recovery of a dear brother who has had a serious and dangerous illness; of an inquiry meeting conducted by the pastor, and another by the deacons; of the weekly sermon on Thursday evening, followed by baptisms. If any one thinks that the church does not have pastoral care, he is greatly mistaken.

In the morning prayer, many subjects had been embraced—the nation, the great city, the United States, missions. But in the evening, there were but two subjects of prayer, God's children and unsaved sinners. The prayers were most

devotional, earnest, uplifting. I wondered anew at those who want a set ritual for the Lord's house.

The text was Judges 16 : 22 : "Howbeit, the hair of his head began to grow again." The growth of Samson's hair was treated as a symbol of the return of the backslider. The text was a little quaint, and the whole sermon was sure to fix the attention. There was wonderful closeness, directness, revealing the inner soul of man. It seemed to me that every one in the vast audience must feel himself personally addressed. Now and then there was a gleam of humor, not distracting or dissipating, but adding to the effect, and relieving from fatigue. There was also, what I do not remember on former occasions, a certain something that called out now and then a response from some earnest soul. What a foolish prejudice there is against responses. A response is all right, if it is printed in a book, and read out; but it is all wrong, if it is forced from the soul by profound emotion.

As I rode home on top of the omnibus, I was interested in this illustration of the far-reaching influence of the Tabernacle pulpit. Sitting next me was a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian from Londonderry; next him was a Methodist missionary lady (American), laboring in China, now on her way back thither; and I was from the Western Hemisphere.

It illustrates the power of his personality that the omnibus driver or conductor, if you ask him, "Do you go to the Elephant and Castle?" answers, "We go right by Spurgeon's; set you down at the door."

Notes of a sermon preached by Mr. Spurgeon on Sunday morning, July 19, 1885, are kindly furnished by Rev. Dr. J. G. Walker, who was present on the occasion, and to whom the manuscript was subsequently given.

Ezek XLVII. 8.

Ezekiels visions encourage under desperate circumstances
The growing cedar. The valley of dry bones.
In this case the Dead Sea is to be cleansed.
In death, dismalness, dread, & despair it is
a picture of the world, of London, of the heart
Yet the waters shall be healed. Room for faith
Opportunity to glorify God.
The stream is the Gospel Dispensation with Spirit's power
It flows into the Corrupt sea & heals it.
It will heal the waters.

I. Consider the Promise. "The waters shall be healed"

1. God himself will fulfil it.
2. He will fulfil it thoroughly
3. He will fulfil it in connection with present methods
4. He will so fulfil it as to arouse instrumentality.

II. Consider the wonder of the waters.

1. Whence they come.
From the secret place of God's throne.
From hard by the altar
From the doorway-threshold. Christ door.
2. How they increase.
Of themselves. Rapidly. Miraculously. Double stream

3. What they produce.
Life. Food, medicine, — this where all was desert
4. Whither they flow and how.
To the desert. To the Sea. Who can diminish or divert
Who can prevent healing force

III. The efficacy of the waters.

1. The gospel sets forth the sinfulness of sin and abiding force of law.
2. It brings hope to the chief of sinners.
3. It reveals Christ as friend, leader &c.
4. It has a vital, effectual power in itself.
5. It renews the heart & nature.
6. It binds men in a real brotherhood

IV The Lesson of the waters.

1. God works in ways unexpected.
2. God begins with a day of small things.
3. God by grace links the Dead Sea with Zion.
4. Pray: expect: then fish.
5. Above all avoid the marshes: neither sea nor land: Christians with[t] Christianity.

19 Montgomery
874 Winchester Old
353 Missionary

To one hearing him again, after an interval of five and a half years, his preaching seemed to have gained in depth, in tenderness, in a grasp of the spirit of the Scripture, in breadth of sympathy. I cannot at all agree with those who say that his earliest sermons were just as good as those of mature life. Although I did not hear him in his youth, I can fully sympathize with Prof. T. H. Pattison, D. D., of Rochester Theological Seminary, who heard him in the long ago, in Exeter Hall, and who writes:

As I look back on the slight young fellow, moving rapidly across the platform, full of assurance and on familiar terms with everything seen and unseen, it is only to contrast him with the Spurgeon of later days, deliberate, reverent, almost awe-struck in the presence of God in prayer, and too deeply in earnest to trifle for a single moment.

One marked feature of the preaching in the Tabernacle was its evenness; there was not much to mark one sermon from another, save as each seemed an advance on those which had gone before. But one sermon became at once historic. On June 5, 1864, Mr. Spurgeon preached on "Baptismal Regeneration." Probably never did he preach under a more urgent and irresistible sense of duty. He saw that a lamentable error on a vital point was spreading through the Anglican Church; that this Church was strong and wealthy, crowned with social honors and allied with the power of the State, made no difference. He was pressed in the spirit.

If I should provoke some hostility; if I should, through speaking what I believe to be the truth, lose the friendship of some and stir up the enmity of more, I cannot help it. The burden of the Lord is upon me, and I must deliver my soul. I have been loath enough to undertake the work, but I am forced to it by an awful and overwhelming sense of solemn duty.

In giving the manuscript of his sermon to his publishers, he said:

"This sermon will perhaps wholly put an end to the circulation of my sermons."

But the result was far otherwise. The sermon reached the tremendous circulation of three hundred thousand. It called out replies and rejoinders to the number of a hundred. The preacher was informed by the officious (and we may almost say "too previous") Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, that he must retract his words or withdraw from the Alliance; Mr. Spurgeon promptly did the latter. As he had feared, many of the most pious of the Low Church clergy were deeply grieved. But he had done his duty. And rarely has a man done his duty against greater odds.

Apart from the every other consideration, he had won a great victory in establishing his own spiritual freedom. If he had weakly withheld his word of protest, when conscience bade him speak, he would no longer have been Spurgeon. He would have been in chains. Certainly he would never have a mightier battle to fight.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. SPURGEON, THE PREACHER.

By Pres. H. G. Weston, D. D., LL. D.[1]

THE greatest preacher since the days of the apostles! This has been my judgment for years. Take your seat in the gallery of the Tabernacle, at the left hand of Mr. Spurgeon, and look on the congregation. Every foot of space is occupied. Through the open door opposite, you can see a company of listeners, unable to enter the house, standing patiently throughout the service. Other preachers have drawn as great a crowd as this, but here is a man who, ministering for thirty-eight years to one congregation, has not seen a Sunday during that time in which his audience has not been limited only by the size of the building. He has used no arts to draw hearers; he has preached no sensational sermons, has presented no novel ideas, has advertised no subjects, has taken no pains to make himself known; yet for more than a generation there has been no fluctuation of his power and popularity, no ebb in the steady tide, no variation in the strength of his hold upon the people. On what page of Christian history can this be paralleled?

His success is all his own. He came to London, an unknown youth, to take charge of an enfeebled church, in a denomination which had no social prestige, with nothing in the surroundings to attract and hold a congregation. He

[1] The author of the volume congratulates the reader that "Mr. Spurgeon, the Preacher" is treated by one who is himself, not only an instructor in the art of preaching, but also a master of the most divine of arts.

attained celebrity at once as a boy-preacher—a youthful prodigy. In this he was not singular. His singularity consisted in his superiority to all the temptations of youthful phenomenal success, in the more than fulfillment of the promise of his opening ministry, so that his maturity, simple, intense, devout, was as unique and wonderful as his boyhood.

Look on this congregation. Its composition is as marvelous as its size. There are very few in the great crowd whom I know, but I see one of the most eminent Presbyterian laymen in the United States, a trustee of Princeton; yonder a Methodist bishop from America. There is a prominent Episcopalian; by his side a literary gentleman of no avowed religious faith. A casual inquiry brings out the fact that the man who sits next to me is from Australia; my neighbor on the other side is from one of our Western Territories. I do not know the Englishmen. I recognize only the red coats of some bright looking young soldiers, scattered through the crowd, but I am informed that all ranks and classes may be found in occasional attendance on the Tabernacle. At this moment there occurs to me the names of Ruskin, who speaks of "sitting under Mr. Spurgeon with much edification for a year or two;" of Principal Tulloch, who, in a letter to his wife, gives a long and glowing description of a sermon of Spurgeon's as "about the most real thing I have come in contact with for a long time."

Other men have preached to admiring hearers, but their sermons, when printed, have been read with disappointment, or have attained a circulation among a limited class. The sermons of this man are read in every tongue in which Christian truth is presented. No other preacher of the gos-

pel has ever addressed so many of his fellow-men on the things of salvation. Other men have died, and their thousands of adherents have bewailed the loss of their leader; other men have died, and those who were allied to them by nationality, or faith, or work, have deeply mourned their departure; but when has the preacher died whose death has so touched thousands who neither in race, or creed, or sect, were bound to him? In London, last summer, for weeks, every daily paper, morning or evening, had its regular telegram of Mr. Spurgeon's condition. At the door of this Baptist preacher—and only in England can the full force of these two words be understood—were left inquiries and messages of sympathy from representatives of every rank and class in the kingdom, the highest dignitaries in the State and in the church giving expression to the common sympathy and sorrow. Where will you look for another instance of a grief so catholic and universal?

How do you account for all this? What is the explanation of this place in the hearts of the people? Of course, it all sprang from his preaching. His pulpit was the centre and source of his hold upon men. What was the secret of his power there? Ah! how many times has this question been asked! how many of us have set ourselves to study this great problem! with what earnest diligence have we sought its solution!

Let us take our seat again, and look, and hear, and think. One thing is at once evident; the preacher puts every hearer at perfect ease. Everything is so restful. He makes no draft on his congregation. His voice, clear as a silver bell, exactly fills the room. At the extreme rear of the house, in spite of the roar of trams and omnibuses and hansoms, his words all come clear and distinct. You do not

strain your ear; he does not strain his throat. He does not draw on your sympathies by a painful effort to make you hear; you are not vexed with the noisy crowd outside. You could not listen more contentedly if you and he were in a drawing room. Then his style is perfect: in pure, perspicuous, racy, idiomatic English, he so speaks that you do not have to give him your attention, or keep your mind on what he is saying; you cannot help hearing, you cannot help understanding. He is very far from being voluble, yet he never hesitates for a word, and never recalls a word. You have no anxiety as to his finding just the word he wants. His style is the perfection of English speech.

He is no orator; if he were, he would necessarily repel those who would not fancy the style of oratory adopted. But he stands and talks with you. Sometimes for a quarter of an hour together he makes no gesture. His manner is that of a dignified, easy conversation, such as would be adopted by good taste in a parlor, modified by the size of the room and the number of listeners. It is the ideal of oral address.

The matter of his discourse exhibits the characteristics of its delivery. No effort is needed to grasp or to retain his thoughts; you do not wish to stop and consider what he is saying or to ask what unsuspected bearings it may have. There is nothing suggestive about his sermon. The mind is filled just even full, nothing lacking, nothing running over. You keep step unconsciously with the speaker, never lagging and requiring to pull yourself up, never wandering off and obliged to bring yourself back again.

His masterful repose is specially manifest in the substance of his preaching. Over every field of thought which he touches, he walks at will; everything is as clear as sunlight;

no penumbra troubles him with any difficulty of tracing the exact boundary which separates the true from the false. He easily conveys to others his own sense of the depth and richness of the truth, and never toils, as so many, with effort to impart his feeling to his hearers. He preaches his high Calvinistic theology with consummate ease to himself and his hearers—an ease as untroubled as if a difficulty on this subject had never presented itself to a human being.

But behind all this is his personality. This cannot be analyzed nor explained; we can see only the manifestations. Its force is shown in his voluminous publications with their world-wide circulation, in his Pastors' College, in his Orphanage. What he has accomplished in any one of these directions would be work enough and fame enough for any man. Its generous sympathy, full of pathos and humor, not only prompts his great work, but, shown in all relations, attaches thousands to him in bonds of gratitude and friendship. Its rounded completeness is such that, living in the sunlight of publicity for a generation, no slander has ever flitted across the face of his fame. There has been no secret whisper of regret at the lack of some minor but very important virtues, no apology with bated breath for obvious shortcomings. It is a personality with boundless force, with sympathy unselfish and universal, with a symmetry which seems to have no drawback and no defect.

As you listen to Mr. Spurgeon, you are struck with what he does not say. As you continue to listen, you are more impressed with this peculiarity, until his denial of self appears—one of his most marked characteristics. Observe I do not say self-denial—this is not a feature of Mr. Spurgeon's life. I do not say self-forgetfulness, which, like self-denial, has often been exhibited in its highest forms outside of

Christianity, but that denial of self, which so eminently characterized our Lord Jesus, and which is the differentiating feature of Christianity. He is reading a chapter in the prophecy of Isaiah. His comments, which are fully equal to his sermons in richness and power, show unmistakably that he knows a great deal more about that chapter than he tells. Any biblical student can see that he cannot have learned so much without learning a great deal more. Most of us smaller men could not restrain ourselves from seductive by-paths, from giving at least a glimpse into opening vistas, very attractive to us and to some of our hearers. How resolutely he resists the temptation! Why? For the same reason that our Lord refrained from speaking of much in which he was intensely interested, and which would have deeply interested his disciples. The reticence of Christ is as instructive as his speech. In this respect Mr. Spurgeon's sermons are framed in the spirit of the New Testament. How many times when hearing him have I admired that denial of self which kept him so completely within the limits of what was most profitable for his congregation.

Men complained of his narrowness; but his narrowness was the narrowness of Niagara, the indispensable condition of power. Broaden Niagara into a lake and you have a shoal instead of a river. It was Mr. Spurgeon's denial of self that enabled him to present with such singular interest and power truths with which he had been intellectually familiar from the beginning of his ministry.

A greater mistake cannot be made (I quote from the "Church Times," the organ of the English High Church) than that which speaks or thinks of Mr. Spurgeon as an uneducated man. In the strict sense of the word, Mr. Spurgeon was not a scholar. With very rare exceptions, no man can

be who makes the pulpit his vocation. But Mr. Spurgeon was a diligent student of the Bible in its original languages. He taught Latin and Greek before he entered the pastorate in London, and those who were intimately acquainted with him say that his knowledge of all English literature was wonderful, and that in this respect no public man in England surpassed him. That he was very widely read in certain kinds of theological literature is manifest to any one who is acquainted with his published works.

More than once I have taken my accustomed seat in the Tabernacle with a feeling of half regret that I am losing the brilliant discourse of some famous light of the British pulpit advertised for the morning. Why did I come here? I shall hear nothing that I do not already know; the sermon at St. Paul's, or Westminster Abbey, or wherever, will be a brilliant, thoughtful, original discourse, to be remembered for a lifetime. I cannot help a sort of grudge at this evident loss.

With the first sentence spoken by Mr. Spurgeon, this feeling vanishes, to return no more. At once I am lifted to a higher plane, and begin to breathe a new and welcome atmosphere. I am launched on the strong current of the preacher's spiritual feeling, and am borne on its tide, a willing voyager. His intense spiritual earnestness is apparent in the first sentence of the opening prayer. It is not a bodily earnestness, finding expression in a boisterous delivery or muscular agitation, not earnestness of voice or gesture,—observe how quietly his hands often rest on the plain desk before him,—not the earnestness of exhortation. It is the spiritual earnestness of a man in communion with God, the consciousness of the Christian's position and relation, that joy of the Lord which is our strength. If I had gone to

St. Paul's, the minister would have assumed that all present were afar from the Father's house; his first words would have been, "I will arise and go to my Father;" and then would have come the exhortation to confession of sin. But here, I am in my Father's house, I am seated at his table, all around me the air is stirred by the sweet music of home; and Mr. Spurgeon's opening words, like those of the Epistles, are a glad thanksgiving for the position of the worshiper: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together with him." In the grateful recognition of the believer's standing before God, the worship at the Tabernacle begins. Every word is surcharged with earnestness. Hymn, Scripture, prayer, are inspired with an all-pervading fervor, shaping thought and expression. Among other ways, it shows itself in a chain of reasoning knit in iron links and made red hot by fervency of passion; a stream of compact, nervous, glowing speech, intensely clear and well freighted with meaning.

But above all other characteristics of Mr. Spurgeon's preaching is its spirituality. This gives it its universal and abiding power. He addresses himself to *man*, not to men. His sermons are remarkably devoid of anything peculiar to time, race, circumstance, or condition. About his delivery even, there is no suggestion of anything local or provincial. He does not talk in English fashion. He has not the accent or tone of English pulpits. Like the discourses of Christ, his sermons bear no special relation to the times in which they are preached, only as the moral aspects of the times affect man's spiritual recovery. . . . Christ's discourses belonged no more to one age than to another, to no one class

more than to another. The first century cannot say, "He is mine;" the tenth century cannot claim him, nor the twentieth. Neither the rich nor the poor can say, "He is ours;" he is not an Asiatic, he is not a European. He belongs alike to all times, and to all classes, and to all conditions. There is nothing in his teachings which does not bear directly on the purpose for which he came into the world—to save his people from their sins. This purely spiritual character of Mr. Spurgeon's preaching makes his sermons as profitable and welcome in Australia as in London, in the log cabin as in the crowded church. I happened, an hour or so ago, to glance at a discourse of his; I do not know when it was preached, but every word in it would have been pertinent and appropriate two hundred years ago. If there shall be a twenty-second century and the sermon abides, it will be just as pertinent then as now. It is founded on the permanent facts of man's nature, and is addressed to man's spiritual condition. Mr. Spurgeon has outlived the contempt and ridicule with which the newspapers treated him in the earlier part of his career; his critics kindly recognize the surpassing force which has wrought so great and lasting work in his day and generation. But they complain that he is indifferent to many tendencies of life and thought in which intelligent men and women are profoundly interested, that he has no lot nor part in the intellectual and religious movement of the age, which, they say, is so completely revolutionizing the world. They do not know that this very separation from the earthly and temporary is the hiding of his power. His Christianity does not undertake to revolutionize the world by any intellectual or religious movement, but to save men from the evil. It promises no blessing to men who do not accept Christ. Its one aim

is to make men partakers of the divine nature. The gospel which Mr. Spurgeon preached was the gospel of that Lord Jesus who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world. Sin personal and sin organic, our sins and this present evil world, are the foes which he combated, and for victory over them he was continually striving.

Explain it as we may, the history of all great religious movements proves that the way to stir men to the utmost, to effect in them permanent and radical changes, is not to address their sense of earthly want, or to care for their earthly condition, but to appeal to the great eternal verities of sin and salvation, an appeal to which the profoundest depths of their nature respond.

A minister goes into the pulpit and looks at the congregation which is about to listen to him in silence for an hour. How solemn the place! No other gathering on earth is like it in variety of knowledge and condition. He cannot know them all; is it possible in the common discourse to speak profitably to all these with their various ignorances, burdens, perplexities, sorrows, wants, and joys? Oh, to speak some word that shall meet the wants of those who are struggling with temptations, distressed with solicitudes and cares, some word that shall guide the perplexed, help the discouraged, comfort the sorrowing—some word that shall bring hope and peace and joy—some word that shall be a word in season alike to duty and conflict! Is there any way of speaking so that all these classes shall have their appropriate word, that no one of Christ's hungry sheep shall go away unfed? Spurgeon seems to have found it, in an earnestness begotten by the joyous possession of the whole man by Christ; in a love for others which instinctively avoids all that will not

profit, and instinctively chooses that which will minister to their highest edification; and in a constant look, not at the seen and temporary, but at the unseen and eternal, always proclaiming spiritual things, in spiritual words, to spiritual men.

The dominant and all-pervading spirituality of Mr. Spurgeon's convictions was the explanation of an apparent change in his later years in his relations to the sacramental party in the Church of England. I say apparent change, for his position and attitude were the same throughout. As is well known, within the last decade, the increasing prevalence of the denial of the supernatural in religious circles greatly troubled him. It did not relieve his distress that the term 'spiritual' was retained in religious speech. The word was shorn of its Scriptural meaning; and the difference between secular and spiritual was denied. Because the natural was sacred and divine, therefore the supernatural did not exist. Whatever may be said of the sacramental party, they believe in a supernatural Christianity. Here Mr. Spurgeon and they were one. How to obtain supernatural grace was the point on which they separated, and widely separated. The one said, It was by sacraments; the other, By faith in Christ. The one said, The sacraments, by divine appointment, lead to Christ; the other, Christ is the divinely appointed way to the sacraments, as he is the way to all else. Whatever obscured the place of Christ, Mr. Spurgeon vehemently opposed; and so his fiercest blows were struck at the doctrine of Infant Baptismal Regeneration in his well-known onslaught on the baptismal service in the English Prayer Book. But when the question was between the supernatural and the anti-supernatural, his whole sympathies were with the people who with all their faults stood

firmly on this foundation stone. He recognized the devout character, the godly earnestness of many of the prominent Ritualists. With only two exceptions, every one of the Tractarian leaders had been brought up an Evangelical; they carried the influence of their early training into their new associations, and in the midst of their ceremonies preached sermons which might, without the alteration of a word, have been uttered by the most flaming revival preacher. Read the biographies of Pusey, and Newman, and Manning; where can you find what we call conversion more clearly claimed and insisted on? Read the sermons of Archdeacon Manning, preached while he was a clergyman of the Established Church, and tell me where can you find clearer spiritual discrimination than in his discourses on the Temptation of our Lord? Mr. Spurgeon was bound in strong sympathy with those who were one with him in the great, cardinal fact of the supernatural character of Christianity, while he differed from them most widely in the method of attaining spiritual grace. Both his agreements and differences were candidly and forcibly expressed.

CHAPTER V.

SPURGEON, THE PREACHER (*continued*).

PROF. T. H. PATTISON, D. D.[1]

WHEN Dr. Dale of Birmingham said that he could no more tell why Mr. Spurgeon was so great a preacher than why Turner was so great a painter, Napoleon so great a general, or Pitt so great a statesman, he gave expression to a very general feeling. In fact, when Mr. Spurgeon began to preach, his hearers under ordinary circumstances ceased to criticise. So truly was the preacher a messenger from God with a word for each one who listened to him, that every real man dropped the critic and listened. This was in part due to Mr. Spurgeon's intense personality. This solid, substantial man, with no promise in his outward appearance of spiritual power, had perhaps more than any other man of his generation, what Emerson says that our earth waits for, "exalted manhood." No estimate of Mr. Spurgeon's power to move and mould men will be adequate unless it takes this into account. I venture to say that our century has produced no truer man.

When we come to examine the special qualities by which he was distinguished, I think that we shall find them to be the qualities which we commonly associate with the English-

[1] As Mr. Spurgeon was, above all else, the preacher, the author thinks himself happy in being favored also with a communication from the accomplished Professor of Homiletics in Rochester Theological Seminary, who has been for many years on terms of personal intimacy and friendship with him of whom he writes so appreciatively and so discriminatingly.

man. Speaking of a lady who had translated many of his sermons into German, he said, in his pleasant way: "I shall never be turned into German myself, but she turns most of my books into German." Underneath the jest lay a profound truth. Mr. Spurgeon could not have been anything but what he was, the typical Englishman, with the excellences and the limitations of his race. He had the traits which we associate with the Saxon character. Dr. Parker has remarked on, "the forms and expression of the remarkable head and face, the head the very image of stubbornness, massive and broad, the face large, rugged, social, brightened by eyes overflowing with humor, and softened by a most gracious and sympathetic smile."

The head and face were true to the English nature. Dutch blood there may have been in Mr. Spurgeon's veins, the blood of forefathers who escaped to East Anglia from the persecutions of the infamous Duke of Alva; but this only added kindred vigor to the truly English stock. He had, for one thing, that trust in the people which from Alfred on down to our own time had marked the Saxon, the confidence in the honor and honesty, the soundness and sagacity of the *vox populi* which makes England at this hour as truly a democracy as any nation on earth. "The instincts of the masses," he said, "can be much more safely relied upon than the caprices of the wealthy and tenured few."

John Bright might have said this; and the two men had much in common. Bright was, in his speaking, more of the artist, and studied far more than Spurgeon did the chime of words and the music of sentences. It was Spurgeon who said, "I hate oratory," and explained what he meant by adding, "Fine language seems to me wicked when souls are perishing." But Bright and Spurgeon alike relied mainly

as orators on the simplicity and vigor of the English tongue. To any one familiar with both of these great men, another characteristic which is generally supposed to distinguish the Englishman will occur at once. I mean that rare gift, the terror of fools and the delight of the wise, common sense. How often in the case of Mr. Spurgeon it sent the shafts of his wit straight home to their mark. It was with this that he met and silenced the clamor which was raised over his smoking and what he had said about it. His common sense cut the Gordion knot in other and happier discussions, and at a word made an end of all controversy. Listen to what he says as to the theatre:

> Our aim is to raise men entirely above all that, to elevate them to a higher level, where they will not feel the want of that kind of recreation. . . . We have seen too often the trail of the theatre across the Christian home to have the slightest doubt as to whether it is an institution which makes for righteousness or the reverse. . . . If a man should come to me and say, "Mr. Spurgeon, may I go to the theatre?" I should reply, "Do you want to go to the theatre? If so, you must go, and take it as an evidence that you need grace in your heart!"

This sturdy common sense was a saving element in the stalwart independence which was another marked characteristic in Mr. Spurgeon. He was absolutely fearless. No one could ever charge him with moral cowardice. From the first he struck out his own path, and trod it confidently. Dr. Clifford has called attention to the fact that when he got rid of the pulpit, the change from that to the platform was "an illustration of the freedom which he sent into the ministry of these later times." His first adventures in London, his earliest actions and utterances, bespake this fearless and independent nature. He once told me that he prepared

for his first Sunday in New Park Street by purchasing a large colored pocket handkerchief, which he flourished when preaching with much effect, under the impression that to do so was the fashion in London society. But this was perhaps his last attempt to propitiate conventionalism, and it could hardly have answered its purpose. With the deacons of the church when after that first Sunday they invited him to preach again, he was as independent as though every pulpit in London was eager for him. He had a genuine Saxon hatred of all servility.

"A clerical sycophant," says he, "is only fit to be a scullion in the devil's kitchen." We seem to catch the times of Bunyan in this plain spoken utterance, and when by-and-by a future generation forms from the composite photograph the portrait of the typical Englishman, Cromwell, Bunyan, Bright, and Spurgeon will all be pressed into the service. For Cromwell he had a hearty admiration. He would rather, he declared on one occasion, "have descended from Cromwell than have the bluest blood in his veins." In common with the great uncrowned king of England, Mr. Spurgeon prized most highly loyalty to conviction. As Mr. Archibald G. Brown has said:

"God was an awful reality to him, and like Elijah, he stood before him. God filled up the whole of the horizon. Jesus was so absolutely his heart's Lord that tears came into his eyes when he spake of Christ. Jesus Christ had fascinated his heart."

This made him exceedingly jealous for God, and for the gospel of his Son. He could not brook any tampering with what he believed to be the saving truths. There is no good evidence that he regretted for one single moment his action in the Down-Grade Controversy. On the contrary, he avowed

that had he not taken the decisive step when he did, "he would have been compelled to do so half a dozen times since." He resembled John Bright in this, that sooner than be false to his dearest convictions he would be parted from his dearest friends. Both men showed their faith by their works.

"I would not give a headless pin," Spurgeon said once, "for the man who does not belong to that denomination which he conscientiously believes to be the best." And then he added, with characteristic sweetness, "But I have learned to love truth better than any sect, and Christ more than any church."

For whilst he was very firm in holding to his convictions, and very outspoken in uttering them, his fine charity and his cheery good nature saved him from bitterness. The leading organ of the Church of England wrote about him:

"He was no friend to the Church of England, but he was what is perhaps rarer, a straightforward and even generous foe."

Nor did any one ever with reason suspect him of self-seeking. He was as pure in heart and as clean of hand as Andrew Marvell, the incorruptible patriot. Dr. Maclaren said with truth:

His fervor of devotion and intensity of love to the Lord Jesus Christ blazed through all his work. He was absolutely self-forgetful, and thinking nothing of himself, everything of his message. His pathos and his humor, his sagacity and his kindliness were equal. His power of cheery work was unexampled, and all that he was, he gave to his Lord with rare and beautiful simplicity and faithfulness.

Another prominent Saxon trait in Mr. Spurgeon's character was his superiority to difficulties. So far from daunting, they rather stimulated him. He never went to sleep,

as Emerson puts it, "on the cushion of advantage." The Metropolitan Tabernacle was a triumph over material obstacles, and the victory was altogether due to him. He set aside committees and became a committee of one. He purchased the ground upon which the great building was planted with money advanced to him personally under most romantic circumstances. He refused to lift his voice in the place until every penny of debt upon it had been paid. In the years of buoyant health and boundless vigor, nothing seemed impossible. He as much as Napoleon struck "cannot" out of his vocabulary. One can scarcely refrain from wishing that such a man had been on board the Mayflower or seated in the first Continental Congress. The courage and determination, the loyalty to conviction and singleness of aim, the intense and yet thoroughly wholesome concentration of the whole nature upon the thing which has to be brought to pass, which have made Englishmen what they are to-day in the world's history—all these Mr. Spurgeon had to a very rare degree.

His humor, too, was eminently Saxon.

"You are the best deacon that any minister was ever blest with," he said to one of his officers, "but don't be proud; you are no better than you ought to be."

On the last Sunday of his life here, when his secretary reminded him that the congregation at the Tabernacle would want to hear how he was getting on, his genial spirit responded, "Let them find out." One needs to see the twinkle in the kindly eye, and to catch the sweetness in the kindly voice, to understand how innocent his jesting words were of any intent to wound. Humor was used by him for its true purpose, and he never mistook it for invective. When he unmasked sin, it was not done with a jest. Sin

was too serious a thing for wit to play with. Yet, with him as with Latimer and Bunyan and Thomas Fuller and Rowland Hill, humor was as natural as sunshine in June. The struggle, no doubt, was to keep it within bounds. A courtly minister was once in his company, when Spurgeon charged his brethren in London with treating him coldly on his first joining their number.

"Oh, Mr. Spurgeon," the gentleman interposed, "I am sure you misrepresent us. I, for one, have never been other than friendly to you."

"Doctor," was the reply, "do you remember charging me in those early days with being so high a Calvinist that I would not invite sinners to believe and be saved?" The courtly brother had quite forgotten all about the circumstance. "Yes, Doctor," Spurgeon said, turning his guns full on the foe, "and no doubt you forget also what I said in reply. Let me remind you. I said that so far from never inviting sinners when I was preaching, if you had been in the audience, I should certainly have been especially careful to do so."

These, then, were some of the characteristics of a thoroughly English nature. Mr. Spurgeon had strong popular sympathies and a simple faith in the sagacity of the one human heart; he was gifted with manly and vigorous common sense; he never courted a smile or feared the frown of any man; he remained to the last loyal to his convictions, although the loyalty cost him not a little. If he was a hard hitter, he was a most generous opponent; and he loved to preach up truth rather than to preach down error.

"I am," he said to the Rev. Charles Williams, "no enemy, no disputant, no caviller. I only want to do the

right thing, and if it should seem to be harsh, I want to do it in love and tenderness."

Autocratic he was bound to be, alike from temperament and circumstances, and he put his policy in one sentence when he declared:

"'Lord, lead me not into temptation' means to me 'bring me not into a committee.'"

He was as tender as he was strong. "A little anger," he said, "costs me so much, and is so apt to blaze into a battle royal that it is a calamity to be aroused, and an event memorably mournful." That fine humor was his which plays on the surface of vigorous speech and determined action, and softens both. At heart he loved all good men, and won their love in return. The whole English nation had come to look on him, as they had come to look on John Bright, with pride, as not only in an especial sense theirs, but even in an especial sense *them*. It is surely to be numbered among the thousand good services for which the world is indebted to the great man who has passed away, that he did so much to perpetuate all the finest qualities of the nation which is proud to call him one of her sons.

The following is from a letter on "Spurgeon as a Preacher," written by Professor Pattison in 1884, on the occasion of the Spurgeon Jubilee:

"Not one hearer in a hundred knows anything of his personal character, of the charm of his nature, of his marvelous power of generalship, of his Orphanage and College. To the great majority of those who listen to him, Mr. Spurgeon is simply a preacher. As a preacher, therefore, he may, with the utmost propriety, be studied. I shall not attempt to make anything like an analysis of the sources of his power as a speaker. It is easy to enumerate certain

prominent elements in Mr. Spurgeon's preaching; but no such enumeration would give to us the preacher himself. It is one peculiarity about genius that it cannot be explained scientifically. Mr. Spurgeon has turned out some hundreds of preachers, but among them all there is no second Spurgeon. There are, indeed, only too many Spurgeonettes among the young men in his college, but the world is not to be taken in by them. Such men as Archibald G. Brown and W. Cuff and E. G. Gange have drawn from him noble and life-long impulses, but they have never lost their own individuality. You can no more manufacture another Spurgeon from among his students than you can manufacture another Gladstone from among the members of his cabinet.

"The preacher is born, not made. This is most emphatically true of Mr. Spurgeon. He came, indeed, from a race of preachers; but he owed little or nothing to them. He was first heard in London as pastor of a church which had numbered Gill and Rippon among its ministers. But when he came to it, the memory of these great names only mocked the empty pews of the deserted chapel. New Park Street has, indeed, a pleasant sound; but the place itself is unsavory and inaccessible, surrounded by tanneries, breweries, and low slums, and lies in that inferior part of London which is popularly known as 'the other side of the water.' The neighborhood seemed to be 'a place to bury strangers in,' to the stray worshiper who started in quest of the almost forgotten chapel. Yet before the boy from Essex had been preaching there many months, the street was alive with people, and the chapel itself was crammed to suffocation.

"It was in the spring of 1855 that I first heard him. He was preaching in Exeter Hall, and it was his second Sunday there. 'Spiritual liberty' was his theme, and there was, I

suspect, a good deal spoken in the sermon which does not appear in the published report of it. What certainly does not appear is the preacher himself. He was then a somewhat slight and rather active young man. The first words which he uttered filled the great hall, and hushed the vast audience, with the charm of a voice, clear, sweet, penetrating, but above everything, personal. He was speaking to me. His manner, to one accustomed to a somewhat stately ministry, was familiar; at times it bordered on the irreverent. His eloquence was more fervid and impetuous than it became as years passed on. But it was also more original, more imaginative, more inspiring. Much has changed in the great preacher since then. He has become, what he was not in those days, but what he most undoubtedly is now, a great man. But I cannot find that his preaching has changed in its staple. The gospel, with which every sermon is charged to the muzzle, is the same, rich and confident, and full in substance and in amount. Then, as now, although not to so marked a degree perhaps, criticism was suspended. You do not now ask yourself whether you are pleased, whether your expectations are met or exceeded. The first words of prayer are sufficient to bring all your spiritual nature to the front. 'This man,' you say to yourself, as you say also in the case of Mr. Moody, but in the case of no third to whom I have ever listened, 'is the great power of God.' The unanimity of feeling on this point is not the least remarkable among the tributes to Mr. Spurgeon's powers. Secular journals, inveterate professional critics, persons with no pretence even of religiousness, are as likely to be subdued and solemnized as the most spiritually minded. I have met only one man who was thoroughly disappointed in Mr. Spurgeon. He was a sen-

sationalist preacher, and his failure to appreciate was, in itself, a compliment. A few months ago the 'Temple Bar Magazine' wrote:

"'Mr. Spurgeon is among preachers as Mr. Bright among parliamentary orators. All desire to criticise vanishes, every faculty is subdued into admiration, when he has concluded a sermon with a burst of his truly inspired eloquence, leaving the whole of his congregation amazed, and the vast majority of its members anxious or hopeful, but in any case roused as if they had seen the heavens open.'

"'The Pall Mall Gazette' is not a journal suspected of religious enthusiasm; but not long since, in describing Mr. Spurgeon as the most popular author of the day, it told this story with approval:

"'In many parts of Scotland, in particular, Mr. Spurgeon is venerated beyond other men. "We English," said a Southron, once, to the old lady who takes visitors round the ruins of Melrose Abbey, "have had many famous men, but we have had no John Knox." "True," said the old dame; "you have had no John Knox, but then you have Mr. Spurgeon!" From a Scotch Presbyterian, what tribute could be more extravagant?'

"Such testimonies are the best evidences that Mr. Spurgeon is master of that 'accent of conviction' which at once impresses all who hear it with confidence in the speaker's sincerity. He has that rare quality which Clarendon ascribes to Sir Thomas Coventry: 'a strange power of making himself believed, the only justifiable design of eloquence.' The absence of many of the lesser graces of the orator is soon forgotten. He has not the magnificent proportions of Phillips Brooks. He has not the impressive head of Edward Irving. He is wanting in the exquisite

suppleness of George Whitefield. A voice he has, indeed, of which, since Whitefield's tones died away in Newburyport, Massachusetts, the like has not been heard. He has also resources of gesture to which he now very rarely appeals, but which, twenty-five years ago, won for him the enthusiastic praise of the French critics, with Provost Paradol at their head.

"But no one passing Mr. Spurgeon on the street would turn to look twice at him, or single him out at once as the most remarkable man of his age. The main characteristic of his intellectual nature seems to me to be ability. He is very quick and ready-witted. He sees through a subject at once or not at all. His sermons, as homiletical compositions, are sometimes, but not generally, very happy. The divisions and sub-divisions in which he delights would be fatal to any save a strong swimmer. He is nowhere so Puritan as here. Yet to him, to Dr. Maclaren, to F. W. Robertson, to half a dozen others of the foremost preachers of to-day, the old-fashioned practice of division of theme is plainly essential. Herein lies one chief excellence of their sermons. They can be carried away easily by simple-minded hearers.

"Mr. Spurgeon differs from some of the most admired preachers of the present time in that he is not at all 'suggestive.' He gives the food in well-cut pieces, and leaves very little for the imagination. Of course, to a highly poetical nature, this may be a serious objection; but, to the vast majority, it is a great recommendation. The most suggestive painter on record was the man who, commissioned by his patron to depict the Egyptians drowned in the Red Sea, covered his canvas with one huge, unrelieved waste of water. He said that the Egyptians were all there, and drowned. Most hearers prefer substance to suggestion. The

exegesis of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons is almost always sound. He walks in the old ways, but his mind is hospitable to new ideas when they have the recommendation of being also true. His exposition of the Psalm is often even superior to his sermon. It is pithy, rich, elevated, devout; hovering in the mid-region between prayer and praise.

"I have spoken of the evident sincerity of Mr. Spurgeon's nature. This it is which most quickly endears him to his hearer. There is no concealment, no hidden purpose. He has no private axe to grind. Strangers who have known him only as a preacher, have put large sums of money into his hands with the utmost confidence. He is the John Bright of the pulpit, in transparent honesty.

"Other natural characteristics he has which are invaluable to a great speaker. He is hopeful and buoyant. I have seen him writhing in pain one hour, and preaching enthusiastically the next. He holds, with Whitefield, that a good spell of preaching is the best plaister. In common, I venture to say, with all the first-class orators of all times Mr. Spurgeon is abundant in humor.

"In his early days he was not wanting in a certain charming impudence. Offensive it never was, but there was a great deal of it; and it served him in good stead at the start. 'Mr. Spurgeon, I believe,' an insolent stranger said to him, on the street one day, 'the greatest humbug in the world.' 'I am sorry, sir,' was the retort, 'that I cannot call you the greatest anything. Good-morning!'

"His wit is quick as a flash; and yet it is sheet lightning, not forked. It never scathes. Invective he has at his bidding, but he uses it very sparsely; and when he does there is no jesting. His earnestness is tremendous. But his is one of those genuine natures which have no need to affect

passion. Like the Puritans, he has ever at command the sister fountains of laughter and of tears; and rarely uses the one when good taste would prefer the other. Of late years, his platform speeches have seemed to absorb much of the humor which in earlier days was wont to overflow in the pulpit. His constant endurance under the shadow of sickness, the pathetic conviction that this life may not be a long one, the increasing burthen of responsibility, the sense that he must work the work of him who has sent him while it is day,—all these things have intensified the earnestness of a nature naturally buoyant, I had almost said mercurial. But he has that same rich, joyous nature which makes the whole world kin with Luther, Latimer, and Bunyan. He is perfectly natural and unaffected. Why did not his popularity turn his head long ago? Edward Irving had but a tithe of it, and yet he speedily succumbed. Mr. Spurgeon is as simple and humble as though he were still the poor unknown pastor at Waterbeach; nay, I believe he is far more so. His amazing popularity has only driven him nearer to God. He has not felt safe to trust himself out of the shadow of the cross.

"It would be false to fact to deny that his strong doctrinal convictions have had much to do with his safety from shipwreck. They have led him to give all the glory to God. They have kept him humble in the overwhelming consciousness of personal nothingness. They have forbidden his thinking or speaking lightly of sin. They have fired him with an absorbing delight in the divine Sovereignty. They have so mastered his whole moral and intellectual nature that they betray their presence in his casual conversation quite as much as in his pulpit utterances. They give unction and fullness to his thoughts, his words, his very

tones. They bare heaven before the fervor of his prayers. At the Pastors' College Annual Conference, held a few weeks ago, which is mustering time for his students, he put forth even more than his wonted vigor, in denouncing the strange paths into which some of his brethren are straying, and in declaring his unchanged loyalty to the old ways.

"Many prayers are rising at this hour on his behalf. Perhaps most of them will bear as their burthen the plea that fifty more such years may be granted to the greatest preacher of the century. For myself, I would rather pray that, be it longer or shorter, that ministry, so dear to multitudes the whole world over, may not outlive, by one single moment, its loyalty to those doctrines which are infinitely more precious to the preacher's heart than even life itself."

CHAPTER VI.

THE PREACHER AND THE CONGREGATION.

E. G. ROBINSON, D. D., LL. D.[1]

WHEN in London during 1867, I was several times a worshiper at the Tabernacle. I was also present at a meeting of the Conference of Baptist ministers, which, if I remember rightly, was held in one of the halls on the ground floor of the Tabernacle, and there first met Mr. Spurgeon. Sitting next him at table, we conversed on a variety of topics, and among others about his College for the training of ministers; but in reply to all my inquiries about its methods and courses of study, he referred me to his brother, who, he said, knew much more about its work than he did. His brief and off-hand after-dinner speech interested and impressed me more than any sermon that I heard from him. In it he alluded to a picture he had a short time before seen in the Louvre at Paris, in which a saint was represented as absorbed in prayer, and behind a screen the angels were engaged in cooking the saint's dinner. Spurgeon reminded his brethren that, if devoutly faithful to their calling, the angels of God would never fail to provide for them.

The sermons of Mr. Spurgeon, for some reason not wholly clear to myself, did not make so profound an

[1] At the request of the author, the veteran theologian and theological instructor, who has done so much to raise the character of our ministry, has favored the readers of this volume with a chapter giving his personal impressions of the preacher and the congregation.

impression on me as I had expected. In fact, I cannot now recall either the text or the subject of any one of them. I was more impressed by the unflagging zeal and fervor, the elevation of spirit with which every part of every discourse was delivered, and by his complete control of the attention of his audience than by anything he actually said. He seemed to me absolutely unconscious of any difference between thoughts that were commonplace and thoughts that were fresh. If new thoughts suddenly flashed on him as he proceeded with his discourse, no change of tone or of emphasis or of facial expression, so far as I could discern, betrayed it. He was apparently so intent upon carrying conviction to the minds of his hearers that all consciousness of self vanished, and he became totally oblivious of any difference in the weight of his thoughts.

The last sermon that I heard from him, in December, 1867, struck me as being specially commonplace in thought throughout; but it was delivered with a spiritual earnestness, not a merely intellectual fervor, that carried all before it. Two American ministers, a Lutheran and a Presbyterian, were on the steamer, who had heard the sermon, one of whom had been congratulated by a member of Mr. Spurgeon's church on his good fortune in having heard the great preacher at his very best. The only thing I remember of the discourse was the remark that the preacher and his auditors would never be together again. It had been ascertained by actual statistics that an average of one died from his congregation every week.

In saying all this, however, nothing is farther from my mind than the purpose to disparage Mr. Spurgeon's greatness as a preacher, but directly the contrary. His greatest merit was that he could command and hold the attention of

every hearer within the sound of his voice—a voice with a heart behind it such as only one in ten thousand possesses. The illiterate and simple-minded listened to him with unending pleasure. He was pre-eminently a preacher for the common people, and for that very reason was listened to with closest attention by preachers of every grade of ability and attainment, and of every denomination, of whom there was always a goodly number in attendance.

When compared or contrasted with other great preachers of his time, his distinctive characteristics become most apparent. Between him and Canon Liddon, the most distinguished preacher of the Anglican Church, there was no resemblance, but a complete contrast, alike in substance, in form, and in manner. From Maclaren, a brother Baptist, he differed widely, having none of Maclaren's power of subtle analysis of the thought in a Scripture text, and being incapable of his concise and sharply discriminating language; but, on the other hand, his was a bolder and more open style, and he used more generalized forms of statement. As to Henry Ward Beecher, with whom he has been frequently compared, the points of dissimilarity between them surpass in number the points of resemblance. Beecher, even in his moments of highest elevation, never lost self-consciousness, and was ever alert to make a good point. Spurgeon lost himself in his subject, and what points he made seemed absolutely unstudied and spontaneous. Beecher's sermons always smacked of his latest reading, scientific, historical, or critical, and were redolent of the living spirit of the day. Spurgeon's sermons always smacked of the Puritan literature of the seventeenth century, or of Old Testament history, and set up a standard of Christian living which at times seemed beyond the pos-

sibility of every-day life. Between Spurgeon and Phillips Brooks, with whom comparison is rarely if ever made, there seem to me to be more points of resemblance, notwithstanding great dissimilarity, than between him and any other of his celebrated contemporaries. Unlike in personal culture, in doctrinal views, in taste and in manner of delivery, they are singularly alike in quoting no authorities to give weight to their sentiments; in abstaining from all allusion to their reading; in the evident absence of self-consciousness while preaching; in the possession of power to bring themselves into personal relationship with each hearer, as bearing to him an individual message, and above all in a sublime, unaffected, but unmistakable loyalty to Christ.

I have alluded to Spurgeon's well-known popularity with the common people—his complete mastery over the minds and hearts of the unlettered and most illiterate. Nothing in the vast assemblage worshiping in the Tabernacle so much interested me as the devout and absorbed attention of lowly people. I took occasion to observe it carefully and under various aspects.

Happening to be in London on a summer Sunday evening, I went to the Tabernacle, getting there designedly after the services had begun and with the purpose of looking at the audience from its rear. I looked in for a moment at the main entrance on the first floor, and then at the entrance on the second floor, where from the junction of the great galleries, there was an imposing view of the vast throng of worshipers below; and then climbing a much narrower stairway I went up to see what could be found above. On this third landing were two open doors, disclosing two triangular rooms, the base of the triangle opening wide towards the preacher, so that all in the rooms could have

full view of him, and he a full view of them. Remote as these rooms were from the preacher (they covered the broad hallways of the first two floors), every word was distinctly audible. Every seat also was occupied, and apparently by young people employed in some kind of humble service. In a narrow aisle of one of the rooms stood one of the most forlorn and wretched-looking of human beings, a man in soiled and tattered clothes, with uncombed and matted hair, with a battered hat in his hand, unnoticed and unnoticing, but listening as if transfixed and nailed to the floor. It was the most touching sight I had ever seen in a house of worship. A more emphatic testimony to the preacher's power could not have been given.

On another occasion, being at the Tabernacle at an evening service, one of the members of the church informed me that at the close of the services the Lord's Supper would be administered in one of the rooms on the ground floor, and that if I cared to partake of it, he would be happy to furnish me a ticket. His offer was accepted, but desiring not to be seen by Mr. Spurgeon, who I knew would recognize me, and might invite me to sit with him, I contrived to enter the room when the stream of ingoing people was densest, and so escaping notice, dropped upon a bench where the people seemed most compactly seated. It was a bench without a back, and of course not the most comfortable of seats. In spite of the solemnity of the occasion, it was impossible for me not to be reminded of a laundry on the evening of washing day when the clean clothes with the strong but not unpleasant scent of soap, have been gathered and brought in fresh from the clothesline. The good people, humble but cleanly, had all come to church in their newly washed summer clothes. That communion service

and the upper gallery worshipers had given me a better idea of the kind and extent of Spurgeon's great work as a preacher of the gospel of Christ than I could have gained in a year's experience as a mere hearer of his sermons. God raised him up for a great work, and nobly did he perform it.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. SPURGEON AS A FRIEND.

BY PROF. T. H. PATTISON, D. D.[1]

UNCONSCIOUSLY Mr. Spurgeon drew his own portrait when he said: "It is not every preacher we would care to talk with; but there are some whom one would give a fortune to converse with for an hour. I love a minister whose face invites me to make him my friend —a man upon whose doorstep you read *Salve, Welcome;* and feel that there is no need of that Pompeian warning, *Cave Canem, Beware of the dog.* Give me the man around whom the children come like flies around a honey-pot: they are first-class judges of a good man." Certainly if ever the man lived whose face invited one to be friendly with him, this was he. The eye, its redeeming feature, was full of kindliness; and his voice, which has been criticized for its lack of sympathy and pathos in public address, was as kindly as his glance.

Even as a child he must have possessed this happy gift of making friends. This first enlisted the interest of the Rev. Richard Knill, a man of rare loveliness of character, who called him up at six o'clock in the morning that he might have a ramble in the old-fashioned garden, and talk to the little boy of the love of Jesus. "He knelt down in the arbour," says Mr. Spurgeon in his last book, "Mem-

[1] By special request, Prof. T. H. Pattison, D. D., has consented to write on this subject, one that he is prepared to treat with tact and judgment.

ories of Stambourne," "and prayed for me with his arms about my neck. He did not seem content unless I kept with him in the interval between the services. He heard my childish talk with patient love, and repaid it with gracious instruction." It was not until he had been with the child three days that the minister, who was visiting the Stambourne parsonage as a missionary deputation, rose to that famous prophetic utterance: "This child will one day preach the gospel, and he will preach it to great multitudes."

From the beginning of his ministry this friendliness of heart impressed every one who had any dealing with Mr. Spurgeon. I have heard that a grave delegation from the Baptist Missionary Society visited Waterbeach (having an evening to spare while in Cambridge) and before the meeting sent to request the company of the young pastor at the village inn. His conversation, fearless and racy and at that time not by any means so reverent as it afterward became, fascinated the deputation, even though it disturbed not a little their sense of decorum. When the hour for the public service came, the two visitors consulted together as to what part they could, with any safety, invite young Spurgeon to take. To ask him to speak seemed perilous, and in the end it was determined that he might be appointed to pray without risking the decorum of their service. A very short time after this he was in London, and thousands of eager hearers were crowding the thoroughfares in which New Park Street Chapel had suddenly sprung into fame. The friends whom he made during his first visit to the London church he retained to the close. There was suspicion to be allayed, and there was stiffness to be broken down, but half an hour of his frank and genial company

put them all to flight forever. In his happy moments of complete relaxation he was irresistible. Fun and pathos, and irony and common sense, blended in a flow of conversation which had in it not one unkind word or uncharitable insinuation. His genial, unaffected unselfishness disarmed prejudices, and made him friends everywhere.

He once mentioned to me that a man, then recently dead, had bequeathed all his fortune, not a very large sum, to him. The money had come to the donor through his marriage with a widow who had left two daughters entirely dependent on their stepfather's bounty, and now by this bequest literally penniless in their advancing years. Mr. Spurgeon at once investigated the case, and handed the little fortune over to them, rescuing them from the poorhouse and filling their hearts with grateful love for him. "The scoundrel," he said, with a good deal of righteous indignation in his tone, "did he think by an act of injustice like that to scramble into heaven upon my shoulders? No, indeed; I wasn't going to help the old rascal to any such place!" Even in this little story there is much of his characteristic *bonhomie*. By means of it he often swept aside objections when more serious arguments might have been only so much wasted breath, and undoubtedly it was a powerful element in his character. A reporter on the "Pall Mall Gazette" told off many years ago to interview him among other "Celebrities at Home," confessed to succumbing before the charm of this easy, good humor, and having called on him in a purely professional way, as he would have called on any other subject for his dissecting knife, he left him with the conviction that Mr. Spurgeon was not only a great man, but also a thoroughly honest one, and a most delightful companion. This frank and often humorous

disposition needs to be remembered in forming an estimate of his character. Sayings of his which seem *brusque* and audacious are wonderfully changed if full justice be done to the tone in which they were uttered and the laughing eye which gave them so much meaning. In this spirit he approached many of the difficulties that threatened him on his settlement at New Park Street, and in this spirit also he met his deacons and other officials, and the many querulous or cranky members of his church, his brethren in the ministry who "wondered whereunto this thing would grow," and a whole host of critics and objectors. One after another they all surrendered, not so much to anything that he said as to what he was. No one can estimate the value of it to the young untried and inexperienced preacher, raised at once from the obscurity of a Cambridgeshire village to the fierce light which beats in London on the lion of the hour.

I remember the Rev. Charles Vince, of Birmingham, remarking in my hearing that no man had ever leaped into such popularity in London, unless it might be Edward Irving, and Irving broke down under it. Mr. Spurgeon, however, did not break down. Possibly his first experiences at New Park Street made him cling to the friends that he there made with a peculiar fondness. What is certain is that to the last they remained very close to him, and especially near to his heart. I wrote to him, on one occasion, at the request of the church of which I was then the minister, in Newcastle on Tyne, asking him to preach for us. It was, I think, my first personal communication with him, and it gave me an insight into his nature, the impression of which has never been effaced. In reply he explained at some length, in an autograph letter, why he

could not come, because one of his most intimate friends was at the time the pastor of a sister church. "As you know," he wrote, "Mr. Carr is in a very special sense my friend, and I have in my heart voted him a monopoly of my aid until the interest under his care is consolidated. '*Not that I love Cæsar less, but that I love Rome more.*' . . . I should be grieved if you thought that I felt the remotest shade of unfriendliness or want of will to serve you; and I do not fear that you will think the less of me for my desire to serve, in the first place, a long known and much valued friend, who in years past laid me under obligations which I feel all the more because he is scarcely aware of them. If Mr. Carr himself gives me over to you—well; but I am in this case not my own." I heard at the time that the reference in this letter was to the dreadful accident at Surrey Music Hall, on the first Sunday of Mr. Spurgeon's preaching there, an accident which shook his nerves and shattered his self-confidence so seriously that for some weeks he was incapable of any work, and for many years—probably to the very end of his life—was disabled by it. Mr. Carr had been with him through this severe trial, when slander and abuse were heaped upon a heart already wrung by the disaster itself, and he never forgot his friend's good offices. On leaving Newcastle, Mr. Carr returned to business and to the Tabernacle, and served as one of its most valued officers until his death.

While so loyal to his intimate friends, clinging to them with an affection almost womanly, Mr. Spurgeon was not less remarkable, I think, for his Christian courtesy to those who were comparative strangers. Busy as he always was, living every day as he did by the clock, he yet found time to visit those whose circumstances specially called for his

sympathy. A Presbyterian minister in this country told me some years ago, that when he was detained in London by the illness of his wife—an illness which proved in the end to be fatal—he presented a letter of introduction to Mr. Spurgeon, expecting only a casual word or two in return. Instead of this, on hearing of his burden of solicitude, Mr. Spurgeon took him at once into the circle of his personal friends, treated him as though he had a claim on his time and attention, and visited the dying lady, a stranger in a strange land, as though he had been her own pastor. To a very rare degree he possessed the enviable art of granting a favor as though he were rather himself asking for one. "All I feel I can say," he wrote to me once as to preaching in Lancashire, "is, that if I am alive, well, in England, and otherwise able, I will do as you wish, and thank you for the opportunity."

To many readers of these words they may serve to recall brief interviews which occasional hearers enjoyed with Mr. Spurgeon at the close of his services. A few words only would be spoken, and yet the impression conveyed was that each one of these numerous visitors was far more necessary to the great-hearted preacher than he himself was to the whole of them. At the close of a communion service at the Tabernacle, I recall the delight with which, after begging me to remain until the throng had passed out, he recounted how many States in the Union had been represented in his congregation that morning; and I who had been present at the various interviews was amazed at the felicity with which he greeted each new-comer, entering at once into their circumstances, and speaking to each one as though he was an old friend. A heart of rare tenderness and sweetness, a mind quick to catch and ready to use

every fresh situation, a memory more retentive perhaps than that of any other prominent man, with the possible exception of Mr. Gladstone, and all these bathed in the glory of a consecrated nature;—who wonders that Mr. Spurgeon made such a deep impression on those whom he met casually in his busy ministry? Another rare trait in his character was his appreciation, often I fear exaggerated, of any favors done to him. More prayers rose in his behalf all the year round than for any other man of his time, and he seemed eager to add to their number. "Think of me," he would plead, "when you have the King's ear." I have often been surprised to learn how grateful he was for each such remembrance. I suppose the sun never set, for the last quarter of a century, on the petitions which rose to heaven on his behalf, and he prized each one, and often referred to comparatively obscure people who were in the habit of praying for him. The nearer he got to the Throne of Grace, the more numerous he found his friends to be.

Nor was he less mindful of other assistance that he received from his acquaintances. On almost the first occasion of my meeting him, he came up to thank me for certain references which I had made to him in the public prints, and which I had entirely forgotten. Not so he. It was not love of praise, I am sure, or the vanity which sometimes blemishes the finest natures, but it was rather the longing for friendship and the appreciation of every manifestation of it. He could not be happy if even a dog or a horse turned from him. He loved the breath of life, and, intensely human himself, he deemed nothing that related to humanity foreign to his feelings.

His readiness to oblige others was very marked. Some

time since, in writing to him at the close of the year, I requested from him a New Year's text, which might serve as a motto for a large class of young men in the twelve months to come. He responded at once:

"DEAR FRIEND: It gives me unfeigned pleasure to hear from you in the papers, and far more to have a line from your own hand. God bless and prosper you evermore.

"I have had a long month of great pain, and I fear I have not gained so much from its discipline as I ought to have done; still I can set to my seal that God is true. Here is a New Year's text—'They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but standeth forever.' Psalm 125 : 1."

I am not attempting here any analysis of Mr. Spurgeon's friendship. It is enough to call attention to some of its leading characteristics, and to illustrate them by these slight personal reminiscences which will, I believe, be all the more worthy of general note from the fact that such friendly acts and ways to one who had no sort of claim upon him, must have been samples of innumerable others of the same kind. The wonder is that, with the pressure of business that had to be attended to, Mr. Spurgeon ever found time to endear himself to his friends and acquaintances by these purely personal courtesies.

I heard it said once by a shrewd observer that Mr. Spurgeon failed to impress those who met him with his greatness, and that in this respect he differed from such a man, for example, as Robert Hall. In answer it might be sufficient to say that the close friends of Robert Hall never thought whether he was a great man or not. The humble shoemaker whom he chose for his Sunday guest for many

years because of his deep piety, did not interest himself with the fact that he was at the table of the greatest pulpit orator of all the centuries, or that the most brilliant metaphysician of his years at college was his host. He loved him too much to humble himself with thoughts which could only, if cherished, part him from the pastor of his choice. And Robert Hall, in common with Charles Spurgeon, had a hearty horror of every kind of assumption, and particularly of that which some ministers affect.

"There are some companies," said the lecturer to his students at the Pastors' College, "into which you will go, especially when you are first settled, where everybody will be invited because the new minister is to be there. Such a position reminds me of the choicest statuary in the Vatican. A little room is screened off, a curtain is drawn, and lo! before you stands the great Apollo! If it be your trying lot to be the Apollo of the little party, put an end to this nonsense. If I were the Apollo, I should like to step right off the pedestal and shake hands all around, and you had better do the same; for sooner or later the fuss they make about you will come to an end, and the wisest course is to end it yourself. Hero-worship is a kind of idolatry and must not be encouraged."

I have referred to the favorable impression which his simple and unaffected goodness, his cheeriness and geniality, made upon a London reporter. He had very sincere horror of what he called "that dreadful ministerial starch." I may be pardoned for quoting what he himself has said on this subject, both because he has said it better than any one else can, and also because it goes a long way in accounting for the almost passionate affection which the people at large felt for him:

"I am persuaded that one reason why our workingmen so universally keep clear of ministers is because they abhor their artificial and unmanly ways. If they saw us, in the pulpit and out of it, acting like real men, and speaking naturally, like honest men, they would come around us. Baxter's remark still holds good: 'The want of a familiar tone and expression is a great fault in most of our deliveries, and that which we should be very careful to amend.' The vice of the ministry is that ministers will *parsonificate* the gospel. Everybody can see through affectations, and people are not likely to be taken in by them. Fling away your stilts, brethren, and walk on your feet; doff your ecclesiasticism, and array yourselves in truth."

I have alluded to Mr. Spurgeon's memory. He had, to a very uncommon extent, that faculty for recollecting names and faces which is so much coveted by all public men. A former member of his church, who had not been in the Tabernacle until then, for some years, told me that he had worshiped there the Sunday before. Unwilling to disturb Mr. Spurgeon after the morning service, and knowing how many persons were waiting to see him, he left the church without speaking to him; but in the evening he remained to shake hands with his old pastor, and was met at once by a friendly rebuke:

"I saw you this morning in the congregation, and waited for you to come and see me. Why didn't you come?"

One familiar face had not escaped him among the five thousand present on that day.

There is a general impression that, especially during his later years, Mr. Spurgeon paid no pastoral calls; and I heard him once mourning his inability to be as much as he wished with his people. But in the case of the sick and

the dying, he felt the necessity for his presence. He needed it himself. How much of the tenderness of his mellowed maturity he owed to ministrations in the sick room of Mrs. Spurgeon we need not say; but in their measure other visits of a similar character were of immeasurable service to him. A friend who was much in his confidence says:

"But the chief secret of Mr. Spurgeon's power was faith in the living God, and in the power of his gospel. He had as real a belief in the gospel as a merchant has in his money. On his last visit to Mr. Duncan in Scotland, I accompanied Mr. Spurgeon to London. He was very weary, but he roused himself up, and said cheerily, 'After my service last night, I went to see two of my people. The wife was dying of consumption, the husband after an attack of typhoid fever. They had neither doubt nor fear, and were awaiting death as happily as if it were their wedding.' With a tear in his voice, he added, 'It makes me preach like a lion when I see my people die like that.'"

Among the last letters which I received from Mr. Spurgeon was a postal card, and I need not hesitate, I think, to print it, notwithstanding its personal allusions, for better than anything that I could say it illustrates the loving nature which made him so many friends; and, besides, it would be hard to find, I believe, in all the literature of letter writing, a brief note in which genuine kindliness of heart found expression in happier words.

"DEAR FRIEND: The best of years be unto you. Your card was very sweet. I am very ill, weary and low; but yet I am in such tender hands that I am by no means unhappy. Let him do as seemeth him good.

"I am indeed favored with the kind opinions of my brethren. I pray to be more worthy of the honor of their love.

"I am glad of the love of yourself and your father, who seems to be growing out on his western side—all good things go this way. It will be no ill day for me when I go in a fuller sense to the land of the setting sun.

"Yours ever most heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

Those who are tempted to complain that with postal cards the age and art of letter writing have passed away, may find reason to modify their judgment after reading this exquisite specimen of compact correspondence. All that I have aimed at in this chapter has been to give some few illustrations of Mr. Spurgeon's friendship to one who had no reason to believe himself more than one of a thousand. If each one who received like tokens of his courtesy and his consideration, his unselfish attention and his bright and winsome goodness should throw his stone, after the old Highland fashion, upon his grave, the cairn that would rise would speak more eloquently than any human language the honors of the rare and beautiful spirit that has passed away.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPURGEON AS A MAN.

THOMAS ARMITAGE, D. D.[1]

WHEN God raises up a servant for a special work, he endows him with an original constitution, and gives his character a set of elements which are indispensable to the right execution of that work. He would not be adapted to it if he possessed another set of attributes, or if his faculties were modified one to the other on another plane. A great writer has expressed the idea when he says, that unless a man "Be born a poet, he will never attain the genuine spirit of poetry." Wellington could not have been a painter nor a sculptor. He had not the creative ideality, the glowing imagination to handle the pencil, or the chisel. Napoleon never could have been a philanthropist, a moral reformer, nor a merchant prince. On the same grounds, Spurgeon's natural predilections, habits and tastes, exactly fitted him to be the one great preacher of London. With his common sense, his methodical life, his quick-sightedness, his firmness, endurance, courage, activity, and enterprise, he might have made a respectable merchant, an able statesman, a forceful lawyer, or a good warrior. He possessed much of the material for success in these lines, but God cut him out of the solid rock to fill another niche among men, and his qualifica-

[1] Dr. Armitage, as one whose acquaintance with Mr. Spurgeon extended through almost the whole of the latter's residence in London, was requested to furnish the interesting chapter which follows.

tions from God shaped him alone for his pre-eminence. During the last half century, he has shed no light on the laws and political government of his native country, as have Cavour, Bismark, and Gladstone; he has given no scientific contribution to the structure of his mother tongue, as has Max Müller; he has given the world no geographical explorations, as have Livingstone and Stanley. His work lay in none of these directions. He was formed for a preacher and born a preacher; he has done a special work at a special time and under a special set of circumstances, so that he stands unique in Christian history. London had a more perfect pulpit orator in George Whitefield, a more finished rhetorician in Henry Melville, a more complete exegete in Dean Trench, a stronger logician in Thomas Binney, a keener metaphysician in Howard Hinton, and a more finished thinker in Canon Liddon. But all of them together failed to move its millions, as did Spurgeon's message from God, in the pulpit.

These records, therefore, of Mr. Spurgeon's work, will be of very slight value to the reader unless he has perception enough to enter into the heart of his inner life and read his vital equipments for his mission. These can be seen and felt by a true spirit, but it is hard to put them on record. Only as the story throws light upon them, can he learn what manner of man Spurgeon was, and Spurgeon the preacher can never be understood until a thorough study is made of Spurgeon the man.

Much of his manliness is directly traceable to an ancestry marked by humility, earnestness, confidence, and directness. Although he was such a robust master of honest Saxon speech, he was not of Anglo-Saxon stock, but descended from the Dutch refugees who fled from Holland

when the Duke of Alva was desolating the Netherlands, in the sixteenth century. Part of the family settled in Norfolk, and the branch from which Charles sprang, in Essex. Poor, lowly, and persecuted, they inherited a noble pedigree in all the higher qualities of purity, integrity, and fidelity to God. For a number of generations the family produced a race of sturdy ministers of the Nonconformist faith, who in turn thoroughly instructed their children in the stern tenets of the Puritans. They were of the Congregational order, were stout Calvinists, and were stamped with sincerity and truth. Surrounded by these influences, almost from infancy, this most notable member of the house evinced a remarkable precocity in all that related to the religion of Christ. The very atmosphere which he breathed was surcharged with the prime elements which marked his entire life. The books which he read in the family were Fox's "Book of Martyrs," "Robinson Crusoe," Pilgrim's Progress, and the English Bible. Fed on this stalwart literature, and listening daily to the most ardent prayers of all about him for his personal regeneration under the power of the Holy Spirit, the boy took the strongest type of Christian character, and grew in that direction, until he found himself an embodied confessor of the sixteenth century transplanted into the latter half of the nineteenth. He cherished the greatest hatred of all religious persecution from his youth up, and detested the memory of Bishop Bonner equally with that of Alva, and for the same reason. His mother and Aunt Ann were very saints, and when they read his determined will, his strong passions, and his highly positive disposition, their concern increased for his future, and their prayers became the more earnest for his early conversion to Christ.

In their poverty, his family struggled hard to give him as good an education as they could command, and although his educational advantages were not large, yet they were fair, for people in their circumstances. At Colchester he spent four years at the school of Mr. Lewis, and acquired the elements of Latin, Greek, and French. Besides this, he spent a year in school at Maidstone, and afterward became an usher in respectable schools at Newmarket and Cambridge. When he was between fourteen and sixteen years of age, his strong mind was terribly unsettled concerning the divinity of Christianity. He says on this subject:

"There was an evil hour in which I slipped the anchor of my faith, I cut the cable of my belief, I no longer moored myself hard by the coast of Revelation. I allowed my vessel to drift before the wind, and thus started on the voyage of infidelity. I said to Reason, 'Be thou my captain,' I said to my own heart, 'Be thou my rudder,' and I started on my mad voyage."

Previous to this, he had a hard struggle with antinomianism, which was very rife in and around London, and while he was contending with unbelief on the one hand and hyper-Calvinism on the other, in his fifteenth year he wrote to his uncle:

"You have doubtless heard of me as a top-tree Antinomian. I trust you know enough of me to disbelieve it. It is an object of my life to disprove the slander. I groan daily under a body of sin and corruption. Oh, for the time when I shall drop this flesh and be free from sin! I become more and more convinced that to attempt to be saved by a mixed covenant of works and faith is, in the words of Berridge, 'to yoke a snail with an elephant.' I desire to press forward for direction to my Master in all things;

but as to trusting in my own obedience and righteousness, I should be worse than a fool and ten times worse than a madman."

Having passed through this double battle for the footing of his faith, he felt the deepest possible compunction for sin, he began a gospel search for God, nor rested till he found peace for his soul. The early part of his sixteenth year was spent in deep humiliation and repentance for his personal sin against God; he wanted above all things to find the way of salvation, and he seemed to seek it in vain. With him sin was not a weakness to be pitied, an infirmity into which he had been betrayed, a mere folly at the most. It was an enormity, a blow aimed at the divine bosom, an attempt to dethrone God, a vile insult to his nature as well as his government, and he felt all its bitterness. When he had come nearly to his wit's end, God met him in pardon at an unexpected time and in an unlooked-for place. In Colchester, where he lived, the Primitive Methodists had a small chapel, which served as a mission station in the Ipswich circuit. The Rev. Robert Eaglen, one of their traveling preachers, whom Spurgeon describes to have been "as pale as death and as thin as a skeleton," preached in this chapel on Sunday, December 15, 1850. The day was bitterly cold and marked by a heavy snow-storm, so that young Spurgeon could not go to his own place of worship, but turned down a by-street and entered this chapel. He says:

"I was miserable, I could do scarcely anything. My heart was broken to pieces. Six months did I pray, prayed agonizingly with all my heart, and never had an answer. I resolved that in the town where I lived I would visit every place of worship, in order to find the way of

salvation. I felt I was willing to do anything if God would only forgive me. I set off determined to visit all the chapels, and though I deeply venerate the men who occupy those pulpits now, and did so then, I am bound to say, that I never heard them once fully preach the gospel. . . . At last, one snowy day, I found rather an obscure street and turned down a court, and there was a little chapel. I wanted to go somewhere, but I did not know this street. It was the Primitive Methodists' chapel. I had heard of this people from many, and how they sang so loudly that they made people's heads ache; but that did not matter. I wanted to know how I might be saved, and if they made my head ache ever so much, I did not care. So sitting down, the service went on, but no minister came. At last a very thin-looking man came into the pulpit. He opened the Bible and read these words: 'Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.' Just setting his eyes upon me, as if he knew me all by heart, he said: 'Young man, you are in trouble!' Well, I was, sure enough. Says he: 'You will never get out of it unless you look to Christ.' Then, lifting his eyes, he cried, as only a Primitive Methodist could do, 'Look, look, look!' I saw at once the way of salvation. Oh, how I did leap for joy at that moment! I know not what else he said, I was so possessed with that one thought. . . . I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away, and in heaven I will look on still, in my joy unspeakable."

There is a manly strength in all this, mixed with everything which is child-like, not childish, but great and grand. Right here, in the same year, we find that firm act of conviction which led him to take the step which severed him from the church of his fathers, and associated him with

the Baptists. By investigation of the Scriptures he reached the conclusion that he was under obligation to follow the Saviour in immersion. The strong probability is, that as the son of a Pedobaptist minister of note, he had been christened in his infancy, but if so, he repudiated that act as defective obedience in the light of the gospel. He saw that everything in modern church life is framed on the scale of capacity possessed by the adult mind, and addressed to the consciences and understanding of believers, and hence, he said, "I must follow convictions in baptism. If any ask, Why was I thus baptized? I answer, because I believed it to be an ordinance of Christ, very specially joined by him with faith in his name.' 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' I had no superstitious idea that faith would save me, for I was saved. I did not seek to have sin washed away by water, for I believed that my sins were forgiven me, by faith in Christ Jesus. Yet I regarded baptism as the token to the believer of cleansing, the emblem of his burial with his Lord, and the outward avowal of his new birth. I did not trust in it; but because I trusted in Jesus as my Saviour, I felt bound to obey him as my Lord, and follow the example which he set us in his own baptism."

He was living at Newmarket at this time, and there was no Baptist church within seven miles of him. There was one at Isleham, and he walked to that place, and was publicly immersed in the river Lark, by the Rev. W. W. Cantlow, the pastor of Pound Lane Chapel, on May 3, 1850. The date of his conversion as here given is taken from Mr. Eaglen's diary, which shows that he preached the sermon from Isaiah 45 : 22, in the chapel at Colchester, on December 15, 1849, and the date of Spurgeon's baptism is taken from the church record at Isleham.

What we denominate true manliness, in its highest order, carries with it the fitting, the strong, the courageous, the dignified, and the enduring. With all these attributes Spurgeon was abundantly invested, and this endowment swept away from him uniformly the weak, the craven, the pitiful, and the sneaking. Manhood is to character what an immense foundation is to a splendid structure. From boyhood there fell upon him high and holy trusts, and God had given him an enlarged nature to bear them in a befitting manner, nay, with ease, as became the highest style of man. Every step which he took in his conversion, his baptism, his induction into the Christian pastorship at Waterbeach, and finally, in his settlement over the New Park Street Church, London, was free from the small, the whining, and the whimpering—it was worthy of the majestic man of Nazareth, whose he was and whom he served. Every true preacher of righteousness must possess in himself a personal basis of mental and moral strength that is native and original, just as every tree must give its own elements to its fruits and each star its own glory to its light. Hence, how perfectly childish it is, if not foolish, for any man to ask where Spurgeon's power lodged, much less to attempt a portrait of its character, location, and scope. Spurgeon himself could not have answered that absurd question, unless he had borrowed Paul's reply: "The power is of God." For all the practical purposes of life, it would evince as good common sense to ask in what the power of Christ consists, as it is to inquire where the power of any of his great servants lies. Few men of any century have filled such a sphere of influence as this great man, because few have reached such a grade of character. Let every wiseacre who speculates on Spurgeon's power,

know this, that when he becomes what Spurgeon was he will do what Spurgeon did. First the man, then his ministry.

Many vain men who would like to shine in borrowed and artificial glory would like to shine in his light, but there are few men in the world who would be either able or willing to pay the price at which he bought the perfecting of his manhood. Looking at him only through the glamour of his pulpit, they fail to discover the deep waters and fiery trials through which he was led, and the almost martyr spirit which he had brought down from his illustrious sacrificial ancestry, without which he must have broken and sunk. From the very beginning in his London ministry, his life was one continuous fight of afflictions. The church of which he took charge had been torn by one contention after another until its glory had departed. True, it had but nine pastors in two hundred and twenty-five years, but in 1853 its future seemed hopeless; it appeared to have reached death's door. After hearing the young evangelist from Waterbeach several times, so many looked upon his preaching as questionable that the deacons only ventured to invite him to preach for the church for six months, while some were stoutly opposed to his coming at all. He consented to come to them, however, for three months, when he was called to the pastorate. When he accepted the invitation to serve them for three months, he said to them:

"I respect the honesty and boldness of the small minority, and only wonder that the number was not greater. I pray God that if he does not see fit that I should remain with you, the majority may be quite as much the other way at the end of six months, so that I may never divide you into parties."

When he accepted the call of the church to become its pastor, he gratefully acknowledged their "unanimous invitation," and made this touching appeal in his letter of acceptance:

"I feel it to be a high honor to be the pastor of a people who can mention glorious names as my predecessors; and I entreat of you to remember me in prayer, that I may realize the solemn responsibility of my trust. Remember my youth and inexperience (he was then under twenty); pray that these may not hinder my usefulness. I trust, also, that the remembrance of these may lead you to forgive the mistakes I may make, or unguarded words I may utter."

It is remarkable that when John Gill came to this church in 1720, at the age of twenty-three years, there was a division in the church about his settlement, yet he remained its pastor for fifty-one years. Dr. Rippon followed Gill, in 1773, at the age of twenty-one years, and, after serving the church for a year, on trial, he remained with it for sixty-three years. Spurgeon settled as pastor of the same body in his twentieth year and filled his office for thirty-eight years; and these three men all sprang from obscure villages—Gill from Kettering, Rippon from Tiverton, and Spurgeon from Kelvedon.

After Spurgeon's congregations had become so large that his meeting house in New Park Street could not contain them, the year 1856 found them worshiping in the Royal Surrey Gardens' Music Hall, which held about seven thousand people. The great preacher's first illness sprang from a panic which seized the throng while he was preaching in that hall, October 19, 1856, in which fourteen persons were trodden to death, and a larger number seriously

hurt. This scene, together with the abuse of the London press, prostrated him and confined him to his sick room for a long time. Then came his great struggle to build the new Tabernacle, which was accomplished, not only against great difficulties, but against much opposition. When he became a pastor in London, there were a few earnest Baptist churches in and about the city, but a majority of our churches there were perfectly hyper-Calvinistic, and were horrified at what they called "duty faith"—that is, the duty of a sinner to believe on Christ. They supported a paper called "The Earthen Vessel," and Spurgeon was the constant object of its attacks, as a heretic, because he pressed the duty of accepting Christ upon all men. Hence, for years he was in constant battle with these iron-clad brethren. Besides this, the Tractarian Movement was at its height, and because he combated the abominable doctrine of baptismal regeneration with all his might, he became almost the most hated man in his native land. His sermon on that subject, published in 1864, commanded a sale of one hundred and ninety-eight thousand copies. Two years later he entered the lists against Puseyism, when he published his great discourse called "The Ax at the Root: A Testimony against Puseyite Idolatry." Its circulation was very great, and the stern controversy ensued which led him to withdraw from the "Evangelical Alliance." Another sermon preached at the Crystal Palace, to twenty thousand people, on the "Mutiny in India," stirred the entire English nation, and still another on "India's Ills and England's Sorrows" awakened the wildest indignation, because of its rebuke of public wrongs. More than one hundred thousand copies of each of these were sold. He grappled firmly with his times.

No matter in what light we view his mental and moral character, Mr. Spurgeon always appears as a well-balanced and unique whole. In all his habitudes there was a strong and uniform individuality of lineaments which made him complete, lacking nothing. Armed with a creative power nearly approaching genius, his soul never failed in alertness and vigor. It was capable of the deepest concentration, and his originality flowing like a well within, made all his movements versatile. Uniformly, that fine humor without which no man is complete diffused its light over all the workings of his mind. Then, quite as naturally, there flowed over his spirit an inborn spring of pensiveness, which at times touched him with melancholy. Acute in sensibility and strong in passion, he rose above and sank below par alternatively, while his self-control was seldom disturbed. He was more like Abraham Lincoln, in this respect, than any other man the writer has ever met. Spurgeon himself was deeply conscious of this peculiarity and turned it to the best account. Hence, he said: "Depression comes over me whenever the Lord is preparing a larger blessing for my ministry. Depression has now become to me as a prophet in rough clothing—a John the Baptist heralding the nearer coming of my Lord's richer blessing." As far back as 1857, in one of his melancholy moods, he turned to the writer, when walking in his garden at Nightingale Lane, and with tears streaming down his face asked: "Have I gone up like a rocket and shall I come down like a stick?" His very popularity made him afraid. He says on this subject: "My success appalled me. The thought of the career which it seemed to open up, so far from elating me, cast me into the lowest depths, out of which I uttered my Miserére, and found no room for a Gloria in Excelsis."

Spurgeon's purity of motive made him one of the truest men in the world, and this was one of his noblest traits. Not his seeming but his reality struck his enemies dumb. The whole man reflected the lustre of a pure heart. No one questioned the noble faith which he reposed in the word of God, and so no one found occasion against him, except as he found it concerning the law of his God. His doctrine of inspiration was not a theory. Such a thought with him would have weakened its divine authority. Practically, he knew nothing of inspiration as an intellectual amusement or a holy speculation. He held the Scriptures to be a message from God demanding obedience under the most awful sanctions. Amid all the revilings and contempt of men, he held his faith in the verbal inspiration of the autograph manuscripts of the Bible, with a steady grasp which nothing could shake, and never mixed the philosophy of nature with evangelical teaching. His theme was the fullness and freeness of salvation, and he laid his extensive plans for saving men on a divine scale. His illuminated conscience, his Christian decision, his pure love of genuine gospel work, and his reverence for the Divine Book, led him to trust none but Bible methods for doing Bible work. This made him a flame of fire, lifted him above all stiffness and formality in his preaching, because it enlisted all his principles, the joys and sorrows of his own heart, and threw every power of his being into his every-day work, with the most resolute inflexibility. His impetuous spirit could bear no control below the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. As the word of God dwelt in his own spirit richly and molded his character into holy living, he prescribed nothing less for the government of other men's souls. Looking upon sin, not as a mere foible, but as "exceeding sinful"

and offensive to God, he knew only of a divine method for its remission. Consequently, Christ was to him a "propitiation for sin" in the full sense of that word, and the regeneration of the soul of man came only as a result of his atonement. As a result, the contemptuous rejection of that provision left men to perish eternally. Future retribution, with him, therefore, was not a speculation, but an eternal verity and a fundamental teaching. Like his Master, his one aim in life was to seek and save the lost; hence he lifted up his Master's thorny and accursed cross as the only way of salvation, and never hung a garland upon its head to hide its offense and heighten its glory.

The ruling passion of his life was his love of truth. Once fixed in the thought that God and truth demanded this or that at his hand, he knew nothing of vacillation. His valor had first decided what was right, and after that his decision of purpose stood by his duty, no matter what might come. The immutability of Christian principle silenced all fickleness. He saw at a glance that no true and permanent end could be secured without decision. He planned wisely, resolved firmly and executed inflexibly, and as a consequence, Alps and Pyrenees became plains before him. Some great work for Christ was planned; then no allurement could seduce him, no failure could dishearten him, no obstruction could confound him. If invectives were fulminated, he felt it painfully, but it simply fanned his fire. If storms were launched down upon him, they only soothed his misgivings. If his best friends fluctuated in their purpose, their wavering only confirmed him. When his foes would dupe him with the cry that he was going too fast and far, he only buckled his girdle the tighter until he made the ground tremble with his advancing step.

Under strain his whole inner nature might quiver, but he did not abandon the struggle, for whatever God required him to do, there he was a gigantic hero. He never stopped to consult public opinion, in high and holy enterprises, but he often resisted it when he thought it wrong. In this, he followed the noble genius of Christ's example, whether it were in response to hosannas and the waving of palms, or the mad demand from the same lips, "Crucify him!" He was too modest to plume himself upon the findings of the crowd without paying the drudgery of scorn as the price. Like the New Testament children, he was ready to serve the multitude by spreading his garments for the tender-footed throng. Like the Apostles, he could give his body as a torch, to light the rabble through dark streets. Like Latimer and Ridley, he could spread his ashes over the cobble-stones of Oxford, that the swinish mob who dreaded a rough road to heaven might find a soft path for their hoofs. He dared to resist wrong public opinion, to plant himself like a pillar of brass before its fulmination, and the light of the Celestial City ever broke upon his face, when he was surrounded by the herd of Vanity Fair.

Much has been said of Mr. Spurgeon's voice and mannerisms, and superficial observers have attributed much of his power to these accessories. Before his body was broken by severe affliction, his personal presence was rather attractive than otherwise. He was not tall, but stout, and his frame well knit, his face round, with small and penetrating eyes, his mouth large, but not that of the first-class orator. His upper lip was arched, and both lips were thick, but when in repose they did not cover his teeth, so that in the pronunciation of certain words, the sharp ear could discover a semi-lisp. His hair was black and very

thick. Early in life he wore no beard or mustache. The whole expression of his face was kindly, quite pale, and the most genial smile played on his features. Warmth, fearlessness, and genuine conviction spoke in his whole countenance. His voice was full, round, and rich, not as silvery as Dr. Cone's, not as pathetic as Mr. Beecher's, but it was held under perfect control, and had more volume than theirs. While it would penetrate any assembly, he never shouted, much less screamed, so that every syllable was uttered distinctly. On one occasion he preached to a vast throng of street peddlers, known in London as "costermongers," but every one in the throng heard him, and thousands were moved to tears; and when the crowd broke up, the general cry amongst them was: "Vot a woice, vot a woice! Ah! vot a coster he would make!" Add to this his trite and homely English, linked with a quiet manner and the absence of violent gesture, and we can see how his delivery added to the force of his preaching. His powers of analysis, his command of imagery, and his ability of description, clothed in this sententious style, made him one of the most captivating speakers imaginable. Every hearer could feel if he could not see, his astonishing aptitude for seizing an idea and his instinctive versatility in its use. It is reported that Foote, the actor, said of Whitefield, that he could tell from his sermon what was the last book that Whitefield had read. Spurgeon had the same impressibility of mind, and one whom he admired he absorbed. He venerated the very names of his predecessors in the pulpit of his church, and unconsciously to himself, he drank in their distinguishing traits as preachers. He possessed the proverbial and metaphorical style of Keach, the theological sweep of Gill, the poetical and practical

spirit of Rippon, and the pure ring of English which characterizes Angus; so that he embodied in himself the whole history of his own pulpit.

But in a high sense, all this was but the scaffolding of his ministry. His real power lay in the supernatural, so far as the writer can read; he considered himself simply as an ambassador of Jesus Christ, sent to deal directly with infinite truth, which he felt bound to proclaim, in the absence of his Master, "in Christ's stead;" and because he was filling Christ's place, as a preacher, he must preach as Christ would have preached had he been speaking in proper person. Only on the ground of this conception can any thoughtful mind account for the boundless expanse which opened before him, for the grandeur and vastness of his power of expatiation. League after league of truth grew upon his sight, which he explored, in the deliberate and copious language which expressed the revelations that filled his soul, by the most easy and natural succession. The most obtuse listener felt, when he became full and animated, that he was acting under the power of the supernatural. His whole being was pervaded with a fervor, a fusion, a quiet impassioned unction from God. Reasoning, discovery, and pathos flowed from his heart and intellect, which indicated the deepest sense of the divine presence in the preacher. Without losing his self-command, or his directness, without art, or rhapsody, or confusion, he threw himself freely and boldly into a sea of thought and feeling, but never drifted hither and thither for a moment. He appeared to forget voice and manner, time and place, and in the fecundity of mind which aimed only at one object, drove home the truth from God to man. Now his vivacity plied a playful raillery, now a sublimity of

thought; then a caressing tenderness; and then again a terrific denunciation, an impassioned appeal, or an ineffable joy, which carried his hearer away with him. And at the close of every sermon, whatever it possessed or lacked, each thoughtful man said: "He was a man sent from God!"

The humanity and philanthropy of Mr. Spurgeon open the thought, that his manhood had caught the disembodied spirit of John Howard and re-incarnated its life. The wretchedness of thousands of homeless children in London so weighed on his heart, that he made an appeal for them through "The Sword and Trowel," in 1866, when Mrs. Hillyard sent him twenty thousand pounds for a beginning. His orphan houses have so increased one after the other, that they now form the homes of five hundred boys and girls who have no other shelter on earth. The manner in which this Christ-like work took its rise and has been nourished, has been fully presented in this book, and all that can be added to profit is to say, that this splendid enterprise alone was worthy of the entire life of Mr. Spurgeon or any other man.

In estimating the manhood, the power and work of Mr. Spurgeon, few persons take into account the molding and strengthening forces exerted by Mrs. Susanna Spurgeon, the "elect lady" whom God gave him for his wife, in 1856, when he was in the twenty-second year of his age. She was the daughter of Robert Thompson, of Falcon Square, London, and a member of Mr. Fletcher's church, (Congregational) and she has ever been to him a casket of jewels, his minister of grace, his angel of mercy. She has been to him, as Bishop Taylor expresses it, "Not a friend, but a wife. A good woman is in her soul the same that a man

is, and she is a woman only in her body." No two souls on earth from the first fair dawn were more perfectly adapted to each other than Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon. He was daring, she was diffident. He was great in action, she in suffering. He was rugged, brusque, and sometimes bluff. He reached all that is honorably defiant in man, she all that is soft and tender in woman. He had elevated gifts, she the most delicate sensibility. She loved him with all her heart. Nearly all their married life she was a sufferer and a prisoner in her sick room, unable to throw herself publicly into all his great undertakings, but she gave sweetness to every pleasure and support in every adversity. Whatever storms he breasted outside, he always found sunshine and a solace at his own hearth. She had more care to preserve his health than to recover her own. An almost silent and loving companion, she was the most discreet manager of her domestic affairs. Thoroughly instructed and doubly engraced with every noble and beautiful virtue, she threw an atmosphere about him so that he breathed another atmosphere at home from what he felt anywhere else. He understood exactly what Solomon meant when he said: "As the sun when it ariseth in the high heaven, so is the beauty of a good wife in the ordering of her house." She loved his literary employments and was his skillful assistant therein. When he was present with her, she was to him as a star in the night, as a dew-drop illuminating a thorn. She bent over his couch of sickness with the fondness of a lover and the firmness of a friend, displaying her courage as a ministering angel, binding up his wounds, and pouring the consolation of balm and oil into the soul of the sufferer, while she wiped the cold sweat from his brow. And when he was absent from her she was ill at ease, for his removal

was to her a keen pang and the breaking of a prop. Capable of the deepest tenderness, she mourned his loss when illness took him from her side, and some of the letters which she wrote him at those times are among the most pathetic productions of the English tongue. At those times she was not only tossed with tempest by her own sufferings, but she was without comfort, that she could not be at his side to alleviate his. One day when she was sorely depressed, as a dark and gloomy night drew on, she lay in her sick chamber asking:

"Why does my Lord thus deal with his child? Why does he so often send sharp and bitter pain to visit me? Why does he permit lingering weakness to hinder the sweet service I long to render to his poor servant?"

Suddenly, she heard a soft, sweet sound, like the trill of a robin by the window. "Surely," she said, "no bird can be singing at the window at this time of the year and night." Presently she found the sound came from an oak log that was burning on the hearth. Then she said: "The fire is bringing out the imprisoned music from the inmost heart of the old oak."

The fact is, that Mrs. Spurgeon's aid and sympathy were invaluable in the molding of her husband's character and life, so that he never could have been what he was without her. His mind was finely balanced, so was hers. His common sense was large, hers was equally so. His heart throbbed with love to God and mankind, and hers glowed in fully as warm a flame. He was equal to the perfecting and execution of every form of benevolence, and in this she was a true yoke-fellow, at every step. While at every turn in his public life he was the target for many a rude attack, she, next to God, was his shield and helper. Not-

withstanding her feebleness of health, she was the real founder of the Woman's Missionary Society in his church, and of that Book Fund which has circulated about two hundred thousand volumes of valuable books amongst the poor ministers of Great Britain of all sects who were smitten with poverty and book hunger. Her ripening and soothing influences upon his rugged nature were semi-angelic. Having known her since the second year after her marriage, the writer can say intelligently that she is a lady of excellent literary accomplishments, deep piety, great energy, and determined purpose. Spurgeon's history will now be an open book for all time; but without a carefully written chapter on her influence upon his life, it will at the best be but an imperfectly written portrait of him. Let all his friends earnestly pray that a double portion of his spirit may rest upon her smitten home in Norwood, and upon her two precious sons.

The great and good man has gone, and we all glorify God in him. Unlike Whitefield, his writings will give posterity a perpetual standard of judgment concerning his mental and moral character, better than any biography of him that ever can be written. He was a learned man, but not in the line of scholarship, and yet his work eclipsed that of the best scholars in Israel. A thorough Baptist, he was the world's preacher. A radical Calvinist, he was brought to Christ under the preaching of as radical an Arminian. A sturdy Englishman, he preached in Holland, and Switzerland, and Italy, and when his work was done, he ascended to his God and our God from French soil.

"He is not dead, whose glorious mind
Lifts thine on high:
To live in hearts we leave behind
Is not to die."

CHAPTER IX.

THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.

AMONG those converted in the almost unceasing revival which began from his earliest labors in London, were several young men who were plainly called of God to the work of preaching the gospel. But they were usually quite uneducated; they were also very poor, unable to go through any of the existing colleges. Then, too, it seemed to Mr. Spurgeon that in the colleges the literary prevailed over the spiritual, and that the Calvinism was not pronounced and unmistakable. He felt that there was a lack.

Acting on his usual principle of not waiting for great things, but rather of taking small things and making them great, he determined to open a school for these students. As always, he used his own resources before taxing others. He began with one student, and one instructor (or tutor, to use the term employed in England), Mr. George Rogers. The student recited in Mr. Rogers' house. Presently, as the number grew, it became needful to move into one of the basement rooms in the Tabernacle. More teachers were employed. All the expenses (including the board and lodging of the young men) rested on the pastor. He was able from his own income, aided by the wise care of his devoted wife, to expend eight hundred pounds or more a year. Then came a lessening of his income, the sale of his sermons having fallen off in the Southern States of America, owing to his denunciation of slavery. At this time of extremity and prayer and faith, he received notice from a

banking house that two hundred pounds had been lodged with them for him, to be used for the education of young men. Soon one hundred pounds more came from the same source. Then one of the deacons provided an annual dinner at which large amounts were subscribed.

Presently there was evident need of a building; and the money came. But first the land must be secured, and it was in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who never sell land. To suppose that they would either sell or rent land for a Baptist College was as if one had asked Pope Pius IX. to contribute to the support of Father Gavazzi. But Mr. Spurgeon lived in an atmosphere of the unprecedented. He wrote to the Commissioners. They at once directed their secretary to call on Mr. Spurgeon and to say to him:

"You know that we have *never* sold any land, but we will do for you what we do for no one else; we will sell you the land."

In this connection, it may be added, to the honor of the Commissioners, that later, when he wanted to buy the land lying behind the Tabernacle, to avoid the danger that hereafter high buildings would be put up, shutting out the light from the Tabernacle, the answer was the same. Truly, when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to be his friends.

Mr. Spurgeon did not gain this kindness and consideration by any suppression of his opinions. It was partly the recognition which could not be denied to his character, and partly due to the fact that he was a power not to be ignored.

Sometimes this consideration was shown in an amusing way. One clergyman of the Church of England used

every year to send Mr. Spurgeon a loin of pork, saying: "I read one of your sermons every day in the year, and I send you my tithe. True, you are not of the Aaronic priesthood, but you belong to the order of Melchizedek, to whom Abraham gave a tithe."

But not everybody took the same view. Mr. Spurgeon saw that there was need of a chapel at Beckingham, near Croydon. Nearly all the land belonged to a wealthy man, a devoted churchman. When Mr. Spurgeon wrote, asking him to sell a lot, he replied, in substance:

"If Mr. Bradlaugh wished to put up a house for preaching his views, you would not sell to him. Now, I regard the Dissenters as heretics and schismatics, and I cannot, in conscience, sell you a lot."

Mr. Spurgeon wrote him, in substance:

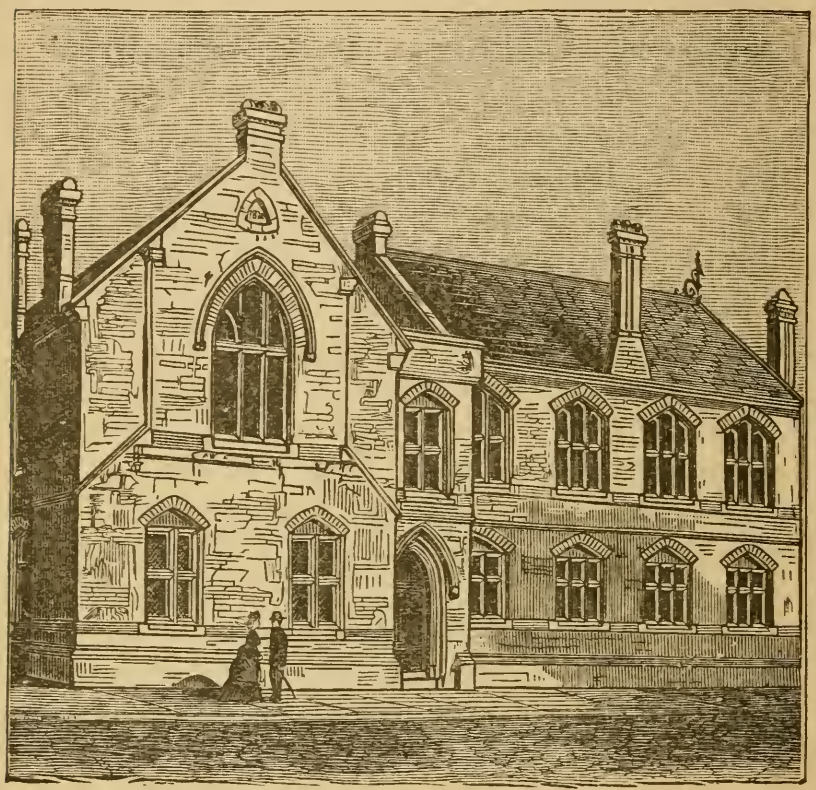
"Dear Sir:—I am glad to hear that you have a conscience, but I am sorry it is not a better one."

The college building was completed, at a cost of fifteen thousand pounds, and opened, free of debt, in accordance with the sturdy honesty of the founder. The course includes the common English branches, and especially the Bible. The object is, above all else, to fit the young men to preach the gospel, to make them devout preachers, scriptural preachers, sound doctrinal preachers, attractive preachers, who can gather and hold a congregation.

While there have been other able teachers, yet the great feature in the College has been Mr. Spurgeon, his lectures, his expositions, his example, his inspiration, his kindness, his encouragement. It was properly named, "The Pastors' College." It is not too much to say that he was the College. And he loved the College, regarding it as the eldest born of his heart and brain. He cherished the students as his

younger brethren, following them after they went to their fields, joying in their successes, mourning over their trials, grieving over the failures which sometimes came to them.

One of his most widely known and successful students is Rev. Archibald G. Brown, who, as pastor of the East



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London Tabernacle, has done a work second to that of him whom he loved to call "Master," but second to hardly any other. On the Sunday after the sad January 31, Mr. Brown, in his sermon, told, amidst deep emotion, the story of his relations with Mr. Spurgeon. He told that, at the age of thirteen, he went with his father to hear the young

preacher at Surrey Music Hall, that he shook hands with the great man, that he was converted and baptized, and that later, when he went to Mr. Spurgeon's study to talk with him about entering the Pastors' College, as he entered the pastor said:

"Why, young Brown, I have been looking for you."

"From that moment, 1 Kings 19: 21 became my experience, for there we read of Elisha that he left all and followed Elijah, and ministered to him."

Another of his students who loved him no less, and who has by his labors attested the value of the training received at the College, is Rev. William Cuff, pastor of Shoreditch Tabernacle. At the Jubilee of Mr. Spurgeon, June 19, 1884, Mr. Cuff wrote:

As founder and President of the Pastors' College, Mr. Spurgeon is unique. His influence over every man who enters is past finding out. It is a kind of magic spell that wins their life-long love, as well as their unbounded confidence. It is touching to hear the older men talk of him, after twenty-five years' intimate knowledge of the man himself, and all his ways and works. Love begets love; and it is everywhere and always abundantly manifest that Mr. Spurgeon loves the college men. He made the College his darling life work; he pets, and fondles, and feeds it as a wise and careful mother does her family. The flame of love burns on through all the years, never waning, never tired. It is a fine, strong spell, which binds every man of us close to him. If all the world should scout him tomorrow, the men who have been trained in the College, like a strong, compact battalion, would surely stand by him, and fight his battle with fiery enthusiasm.

As the years roll on, our love for the President increases, and knows no bounds. We are no longer raw students, fresh from every imaginable trade and occupation, including handling the plough and the scythe, as well as filling every position in big firms in the city or town. We are now *men*, well disciplined, and seasoned in all kinds of pas-

toral and public life. But the College is dearer than ever, and the honored President is our fond ideal of a preacher, pastor, and patron saint. I write thus strongly, for I see the faces and feel the touch of more than six hundred brothers, who would, to a man, subscribe to my utterance with a loud *Amen!*

Mr. Spurgeon is now (1884) fifty years old, and, despite his often infirmities, is as fresh, young, and humorous as ever, when strung to the right key. As I listened to this year's annual address to the Conference, I said, "Well, notwithstanding the pain, weariness, and work of all these years, your brain and tongue are as vigorous as ever." It was, indeed, a marvelous deliverance. Its effect on the six hundred men beggars all description. It was brimful of passion and pathos, pleading and reasoning. Love and logic were on fire, at the tip of his tongue, which flung it out on us in burning words, well chosen, and strung to the music of his many-toned and marvelous voice. We wept and laughed by turns. For a whole hour and a half did he talk; and for that time we all thrilled, and throbbed, and burned with emotion and enthusiasm, till prayer to God gave the best expression to our pent-up feelings.

As creeds are so much decried in our day, a word about the doctrine taught in the College may not be out of place. Everybody knows that Mr. Spurgeon holds the old-fashioned Calvinistic doctrine. We should therefore naturally expect this doctrine to be taught to the young men. It is, and that most definitely.

The first men in the College and the last out of it stand firmly by the Puritan theology, and not what is called "*New* theology." Of course, there is, here and there, an exception, but such are very few, and soon, not being with us, they go out from us, and find more congenial society for tall talk about "the advance of modern thought," and "the decay of dogmatic teaching."

It is often said, "Spurgeon's men are the most clannish lot of fellows in the world. They swear by one another, and help each other always and everywhere." Quite true. We do. We always have. We still mean to. Our Annual Conference is a great factor of this feeling of clannishness and brotherhood. The President is brother and friend to us all. We catch that spirit and feeling, and are pledged

to one another by a thousand strong ties and precious memories, which spring from and centre in the President. Our Conference was formed mainly to foster and feed this feeling of oneness and brotherhood. The first Conference of the President, Vice-Presidents, Tutors, and present and former students, was held March, 1865. One has been held every year since. I am proud to say I have been present at them all but one, and I know well their power and blessing to all the men. They come up to the Conference from every nook and corner of the land. Some of them are martyrs to their position, serving Christ in poverty and obscurity and loneliness. They are heroes of the cross, brave and loyal unto Christ. They come up to greet their comrades from every part of the well-fought field; and the greetings are wonderful. I have seen tears on many a manly face, as hands have gripped once more, and words of loving cheer have been again uttered. Our Conference is a real, live thing, and goes to keep us all one, wherever we may settle.

The constitution of the Conference is simple. Its main features may be summed up into an agreement upon three things: First, upon the doctrines of grace; secondly, upon believers' baptism; thirdly, upon earnest endeavors to win souls to Christ. The annual meeting keeps these things ever before us. The sitting of the Conference lasts a week, so that we have time to consider all subjects touching our connections and life work. Every Conference has seemed better than the preceding, till, this year, we all did agree to say, "Well, this caps all. *It has been the best.*"

At first, the College was looked down upon by many, who knew it would be a failure. As the men settled over the churches, they were called "ignorant and rough." Certainly, we were not like the old type of white-tie and broad-cloth, with cut-and-dried essay in the pulpit. But, whether we were "ignorant and rough," or not, we now leave our work and positions to say: Our men are now pastors over many of our largest and best churches, from Rev. E. G. Gange, of Broadmead, Bristol, downwards.

When it has been said to me, "Your men copy Mr. Spurgeon so," I have always said, and say now, "Find us a better model." Undoubtedly, we have caught his manner of doing things as well as his spirit; I am not ashamed to

say that I have most carefully studied him in every thing, and I bless the Lord I know him and all his methods so well.

I will close my remarks on a subject I love so well, with a few words from Mr. Spurgeon's own pen about the College. They were written years ago, but are as true now as then:

"As to our object in conducting the College, we rejoice that we have been successful, beyond our hopes. Our first aim has been to educate men of native talent, with good speaking powers, who believed themselves to be called to the work of the ministry. We persistently refuse men who are recommended to us as persons of character and studious habits, who, nevertheless, have not actually tried their powers of speech. We *must* have speakers; we can give a man education, but it would be useless to profess to bestow oratorical powers. We expect the men to have had two or three years' preaching at least, and to have had evidences of usefulness following their labors; then our object is to remove the rudeness of ignorance, and supply the knowledge in which they are deficient. Scholarship we do not despise nor neglect, but our main object is to educate the practical, rather than the learned man. We want, by God's help, in the first place, to send out good preachers, good pastors, good evangelists; and, secondarily, good scholars—good scholars, however, only with the view of their being efficient preachers. We think that God uses every variety of talent, but that the shrewd, common-sense, rough-and-ready brother, when anointed with holy zeal, be he learned or not, is usually a successful man; such men we seek for, and such men seek for us."

In the last paragraph of last year's report (1884), Mr. Spurgeon says:

"During the twenty-eight years of our existence, six hundred and seventy-five men, exclusive of those at present studying with us, have been received into the College, 'of whom the greater part remain unto this day; but some (forty-six) have fallen asleep.' Making all deductions, there are now in the work of the Lord, in some department of useful service, about five hundred and sixty brethren. Of these, five hundred and five are in our own denomination as pastors, missionaries, and evangelists."

For the following illustration of Mr. Spurgeon's influence over young men, we are indebted to Rev. George E. Rees, of Philadelphia, formerly a student at Bristol College, England.

In the year 1868, the Autumnal Meetings of the Baptist Union were held at Bristol. It was not customary to send the visiting friends to hotels and boarding houses, for every Christian home was open to receive guests. Hospitality was the law of the hour. Every denomination joined in entertaining, including high dignitaries of the Church of England. The students of the Baptist College, like every one else, were animated by a desire to entertain, and it was resolved to invite Mr. Spurgeon and two or three other prominent men to breakfast in the college building. It was a great occasion with the students and the presence of the chief guest imparted a hilarious spirit to all. His good nature and jollity infected everybody, and broke up the reserve and timidity common to most of us when in the presence of distinguished persons. There were no long pauses of oppressive silence when Mr. Spurgeon sat at the table. The house was full of mirth and laughter from the hour he entered it. When breakfast was over, we adjourned to the lecture room where Dr. F. W. Gotch was accustomed to lecture to his students. Many friends of the college had gathered to hear Mr. Spurgeon talk to the young men. The previous evening he had telegraphed to London for some of the lectures he was accustomed to give to the students of his own college. They had not yet arrived and his brother James went to the railway office in search of them.

During the time of waiting, Mr. Spurgeon began to talk in an informal manner about things in general. One foot was on a chair and one hand in his pocket, and his face wore that contagious brightness so common to it in his earlier years. Very soon the lecture room became a scene of convulsive laughter and tears. We forget what he said, but the emotions and heart-stirrings we can never forget. Nothing we had ever heard of Mr. Spurgeon had given us a true conception of his electrifying power over young men. That brief hour was enough to explain why all the students

of his college had caught so much of his spirit, cultivated his voice, and adopted his methods of speech and work. We had often heard them criticised for the Spurgeonic tones and for going up and down the land as imitators of their famous preacher. It must be confessed that the men of older Baptist colleges were not predisposed to think very kindly of Spurgeon's students. They were pushing into nearly all the vacant churches, creating a sort of glut in the ministerial market, and, as some said, lowering the standard of scholarship and culture in the Baptist ministry. We had heard a great deal of this and were more or less affected by the prevailing sentiment. But after being in Mr. Spurgeon's presence half an hour, every disposition to blame his students for following their teacher's methods and imitating his voice and style of speech was gone. We could not see how young men could help it, for he was a man of so much distinctive personality and so supremely attractive, that every one necessarily and unconsciously received upon his mind and character the image of Spurgeon himself. From that day to this, we have had no disposition to blame any of his students for having his stamp upon them. It is a good stamp to have. No voice that we have ever heard could be imitated with so much advantage as his.

After he had talked to us for twenty minutes, his brother James returned with a parcel of his lectures, and, having looked over them, he placed one on the table from which he gave us full extracts. It was afterward published in his first volume of "Lectures to My Students." He did not read, but let his eye fall on the lecture as it lay on the table before him. It was the "Lecture on the Voice," perhaps the brightest and most amazing in the series. It was exhilarating to the utmost degree. Englishmen, strange as it may seem to us on this side of the Atlantic,—Englishmen, phlegmatic and self-satisfied as they often are,—are quick to see a point and respond with all their souls to a bit of humor or a funny story. They indulge far more freely in laughter and applause than we do. It may readily be imagined then how the students and young ministers (the best laughers and applauders in the world) greeted almost every sentence with boisterous cheers, as the speaker described the various kinds of voices heard

in our pulpits. He described the dignified, doctorial, inflated, and bombastic style of pulpit speech, with rolling and swelling voice, then the wincing, lady-like, and dawdling style, with inimitable humor. Perhaps he excelled in his caricatures of the *ore rotundo* school of oratory. No one ever hated unnaturalness in manner of speech with a more perfect hatred than he. Very few things which Mr. Spurgeon wrote are more fresh and entertaining, or more religiously helpful than those lectures to his students. Of course, they have not literary finish, nor do they measure up to the standard of Brooks' and Dale's lectures at Yale; but in some respects they are the best, most practical and soul-moving of any lectures delivered to theological students. Then next to these come the addresses given to his students at the Annual Conferences of the Pastors' College. One of the latest of them was that vigorous plea for the old theology called "The Greatest Fight in the World," the title being evidently suggested by Drummond's "The Greatest Thing in the World." He himself said, in speaking of his lectures to his students: "I do not offer that which cost me nothing, for I have done my best and taken abundant pains."

During the week beginning Sunday, May 1, 1881, was the Annual Conference of the Students and Graduates of the Pastors' College. The former students came from all over England, drawn by the loving desire to sit once more at the feet of their President, Pastor, and Friend. Monday was occupied largely with a prayer meeting. On Tuesday, Mr. Spurgeon gave his Annual Address. In this address, he pours out the richness of his affection and his experience. I doubt if anywhere his highest qualities come out more strongly than on these occasions and in his lectures to the students. Sometimes the hearers are aroused to an almost overpowering degree of enthusiasm.

On Wednesday there was a conference on the topic, "How to win souls and to evangelize England." Six or eight former students, now pastors, spoke. From time to

time, Mr. Spurgeon would put in a word of caution, of encouragement, of instruction, of experience. At one time, he said:

We must be careful not to despise small opportunities. Sometime ago, I had been very ill. On Sunday morning, feeling a little better, though weak, I managed to get down stairs. My wife said to me:

"Do you think you could read a chapter in the Bible to the servants and any who might come in?"

I told her I would try. About twenty came in, and I read a chapter, and explained it, though in great weakness. My second gardener went home and said to his wife:

"Why, I understand the Bible when Master reads it." His wife said:

"Do you think he will do the same thing next Sunday?" "Perhaps, if he doesn't get well." In the course of the week, he was converted. Next Sunday his wife came, and she and one of her friends were converted.

In the evening was the annual meeting and supper, the Lord Mayor, Sir William Mac Arthur, presiding. In expressing his thankfulness for what had been done by the College and the students, Mr. Spurgeon said, "It appears to me that nobody ever had such friends as I. I have friends who write to me, saying, 'Tell me whenever you are in want of money.'"

One of the young men read a paper on "Temperance in its Relation to Religion." After the paper, Mr. Spurgeon said, "I have been an abstainer for several years."

It may be added in this connection that Rev. W. J. Mayers, of Bristol, a former student of the Pastors' College, told the writer, that in 1884 he put the blue ribbon upon Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon. There is no subject, (after salvation by Christ) upon which Mr. Spurgeon has spoken more often and more earnestly than upon the evil of drink. In

the most widely circulated of his books, "John Ploughman's Talk" and "John Ploughman's Pictures," he has, in the homely and forcible and direct speech of John Ploughman, warned and pleaded against the ale house, and has shown the folly of the man who "has a hole under his nose, and pours down all his wages."

A colporteur of the Colporteurs' Association reports: "The book, 'John Ploughman's Pictures,' has been the means of leading one man to give up drink. He has joined the Congregationalists, and he wishes me to tell Mr. Spurgeon that he owes his conversion to that book."

In his Annual Report as President (1881), Mr. Spurgeon, in speaking of the societies among the students, said:

"The Temperance Society also does a good work and tends to keep alive among the men a burning hatred of England's direst curse." A lady highly respected in Philadelphia, Mrs. C. E. Moorhead, said to the writer:

"Twenty years ago I was at the same hotel with Mr. Spurgeon in Paris; and at the long dining table, he was the only gentleman who did not touch wine."

And we must bear in mind the almost universal use of wine and beer among all classes in England, ministers not excepted. The writer heard Mr. Gladstone, in his speech on the Budget, (1881) say:

"Mr. Bass (now Lord Burton) has given us the most delightful beverage ever known since nectar went out of fashion."

The founding of the Pastors' College by a young man of twenty-six was a wonderful instance of that bravery and faith in God which would have been condemned as foolhardiness if it had not been justified by results. But Mr. Spurgeon felt himself led, and almost forced into it by the

plain providence of God. The issue passed his brightest hopes; ninety thousand have been baptized by pastors who studied at the College. Mr. Spurgeon, in vindicating the existence of the College, once showed that but for the baptisms by the students, there would have been an actual diminution of the denomination in the preceding year.

The College enabled him to do what is one of the greatest means of usefulness: he multiplied himself (we say it with profound reverence) as the Master repeated himself in his apostles and disciples. Wherever there was a loving, devout, earnest student, there was a smaller Spurgeon. They are not editors; they are not literateurs; they are not professors: they are preachers. And if, now and then, they show by their tones or manner the traces of the master whom in common with all the world they admired, is it strange? Is it uncommon in America to recognize in the pupils something of the teacher? There is only one way to avoid all liability of being imitated; it is by being destitute of all that can tempt to imitation.

Not that Mr. Spurgeon made Spurgeonites or that he founded a New School, the School of Spurgeonism. It is to his honor that he introduced no new doctrines. He expressly abjured the thought of such a scheme. If men might but have more of the doctrine of Jesus and Paul, he was satisfied. As always, the penalty of success was greater burdens. When the students went out and preached in destitute places, a blessing so rested on their labors that congregations were gathered, and chapels were needed. To whom should the young men look but to the loving friend, and the strong helper? And he responded first from his own means. His last letter to his pupil, Mr. Cuff,

carried fifty pounds for a church enterprise. And then the church was enlisted.

Some of the students went as missionaries to the lands of heathenism or of baptized superstition. These too called for help. But as the calls grew, the faith of the Lord's servant grew, and the Lord's faithfulness became more manifest. From unexpected quarters help came. Persons whom he had never known, yet who knew his wisdom and goodness, placed large sums in his hands. And in a multitude of cases these gifts just met some pressing need. The old miracles seemed renewed.

Such cases as these would happen all the time. Mr. Spurgeon, driving not far from his home on Tuesday, saw a spot where there was need of a chapel. He asked the Lord for help. On Thursday, when he came home, his wife said:

"There was a gentleman here to see you, and he left some money for you to use just as you choose; and how much do you think it was?"

"Five hundred pounds?"

"No; it was one thousand pounds."

So Mr. Spurgeon bought a lot for the chapel for five hundred pounds, selling off enough to make it cost but two hundred and fifty pounds; and the chapel was built.

They begged him to come to a village where a poor brother wanted to build a house. He went and preached to them. Then he said:

"It will cost six hundred pounds to put up a little chapel. How much can you raise among yourselves?"

They reckoned up and thought by hard lifting and great sacrifice, they could raise twenty pounds. He said to them:

"Now I want you to promise me that you will all pray about this."

A little while after, a gentleman called to see Mr. Spurgeon, and said:

"I owe you a great deal. I once had a handsome property, but I lost it by endorsing. I was much discouraged, but just then I heard you preach, and you gave me such faith and courage, that I began again, and God has blessed me. I want to give you one hundred pounds to use as you please."

"That will be a good start for the little church," said Mr. Spurgeon, and he told the gentleman about it.

"Please tell the people," the latter said, "that I will not only give this one hundred pounds, but I will give the last hundred of the six hundred."

"And now," added Mr. Spurgeon, "I am looking out for the other four hundred pounds."

Once, when the Trustees of the Orphanage met, there were three hundred and sixty pounds on hand, and bills to be paid amounting to three hundred and sixty pounds. As this left the treasury empty, he said:

"We must look to God; but first, how much are we ourselves willing to do? I have twenty-five pounds for the orphans. Here are six of us; I suppose each will do as much."

And at once, one hundred and fifty pounds was made up. Then, without leaving his seat, Mr. Spurgeon asked God for help. Within a very short time, he received eight hundred pounds for the Orphanage and one thousand six hundred pounds for other objects. Very soon, a gentleman called and said:

"Mr Spurgeon, you do not know me?"

"No, sir."

"Will you promise not to make any effort to know my name?"

"Certainly."

"Well, here is one hundred pounds for the College, one hundred pounds for your colporteurs, and five hundred pounds for the Orphanage."

We are indebted to the kindness of Churchill H. Cutting, Esq., for the following, addressed to his father, the late honored S. S. Cutting, D. D., Secretary of the American Baptist Education Commission, which gives Mr. Spurgeon's idea of a theological school for plain ministers. It embodies the gigantic common sense characteristic of its author.

1. Found a College into which men with an ordinary English education can be admitted without being degraded by comparison with graduates of secular universities.
2. Set before the men no ambition after scholarship for its own sake, but keep them to the one aim of being soul-winners and edifiers of the saints—therefore do not aim at degrees, etc.
3. Provide for poor men all necessaries—board, lodging, clothes, books, in fact, all they want.
4. Keep all this at the cheapest rate, that men may not form habits they cannot afterward live up to.
5. Affiliate the College to a large working church. Expect the men to be members, and during the first six months workers in the schools, etc.
6. Keep the period of study short, say two to three years. Never exceed this. Men who cannot do in that time, are no great good for rough work.
7. Give every man the first three or six months as probation, and constantly weed out the idle, vain, inefficient, or devoid of zeal.
8. Keep up the devotional spirit by giving half a day in the week for nothing but prayer. Begin each class with prayer.
9. Make them live in Christian families, and send round

a Christian man constantly to inquire as to habits, domestic, moral, etc.

10. Make it known by your magazines and papers that men can be received and are wanted. See my yearly Almanac.

11. Do not embarrass the President with committees, etc.

12. Sort the men and do not make the studies in each case the same. Some never will learn classics; some will readily.

13. Have frequent sermonizings, discussions, etc., and encourage extempore speech.

14. Let a man who is really a good fellow stay till a place is ready for him; and let him come back, if, in his first church, he does not succeed. Keep him with you another term and let him try again.

15. With poor men keep up a system of traveling libraries to keep them in books and help them to go on educating themselves.

16. Let tutors be brethren to the men, not lords. The more familiar the intercourse the deeper the love and the truer the respect.

17. Call in pastors, missionaries, and successful workers to talk to the men and tell them their experiences.

18. Keep the men to outdoor preaching and encourage them to be winning souls while students.

19. Make the physical sciences a great point; they furnish illustrations, relieve the severity of study, and enlarge the mind. Change of work is recreation.

20. Keep the church praying for them. Interest the church by meetings in which the men speak. Let beginners speak, and then in after months the people will remark their progress, and see the reality of their preparation.

21. Believe in Dr. Francis Wayland's "Principles of the Baptists," and practically carry them out.

22. The Lord, the Holy Spirit direct you, and bless you with his guidance; follow that guidance, and not my recommendations wherein they fail.

C. H. SPURGEON.

Mr. Spurgeon's well-known estimate of committees comes out in the above, as in his well-known *mot*, "The best com-

mittee is a committee of three, of whom one is away and another is at home sick."

Akin to the College in spirit is the Colporteurs' Association, which has its headquarters at the College, and is sustained by the church. It has about ninety colporteurs in

COLPORTEUR AND BIBLE CARRIAGE.

the field, who sell each year toward two hundred thousand books and twice that number of magazines, besides giving away tracts and sermons by the million.

Rev. R. Shindler, in his most interesting "C. H. Spurgeon's Life and Work," gives a list of various missions and schools

connected with the Tabernacle, besides city missionaries, Bible women, mothers' meetings, orphanage, and colporteur working societies, etc. In Mr. Spurgeon's mind, salvation and service were inseparable; he knew no salvation that did not also mean service.

The following list will give some idea of the missionary work carried on by the Metropolitan Church:

Almshouses Sunday-school.
Dunn's Institute.
Boddy's Bridge.
Portobello Road, Notting Hill.
Battersea Park Road.
Lavinia Road, King's Cross.
Little George Street, Bermondsey.
Bedfont, near Hounslow.
North Cheam.
Waltham Abbey.
Townsend Street, Old Kent Road.
Centenary Memorial.
Richmond Street, Walworth, Sunday and Ragged schools.
Haddon Hall, Bermondsey.
Surrey Gardens Memorial Hall.
Stockwell Orphanage.
Lansdowne Place.
Rock Mission, Camberwell.
Jireh Mission, Garden Row, S. E.
Bermondsey Ragged School.
Boundary Lane, Camberwell.
Ebury Street, S. W.
Great Hunter Street.
North Street, Kensington.

Snow's Field, Bermondsey.
Palmer's Green.
Wanstead.
Surrey Square, Old Kent Road.
Townley Street, Walworth.
Vinegar Ground, Old Street.
Ormside Street, Old Kent Road.
Scovill Road, Borough.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Sunday-school.
Ten Bible Classes: One for men only, one for women only, one for men and women, the remainder for young men and young women.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Christian Brothers' Benefit Society.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Evangelists' Association and Country Mission (with training class for the workers).
Metropolitan Tabernacle Flower Mission.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Gospel Temperance Society.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Ladies' Benevolent Society.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Ladies' Maternal Society.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Loan Tract Society (for the house-to-house distribution of Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons in the neighborhood of the Tabernacle).
Spurgeon's Sermons' Tract Society (for the circulation of Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons in Country districts).
Metropolitan Tabernacle Poor Ministers' Clothing Society.
City Missionaries, BibleWomen, Mothers' Meetings, Orphanage and Colportage Working Societies, and numerous other agencies.

At the Memorial Services at the Tabernacle, on Wednesday, February 10th, there was a meeting for members and

workers at which there were fervent and manly pleadings for the Home Mission Work of the church, and Mr. William Olney stated that, "On Sunday evenings fully one thousand members of the Tabernacle were absent, engaged in this mission work."

CHAPTER X.

THE ORPHANAGE.

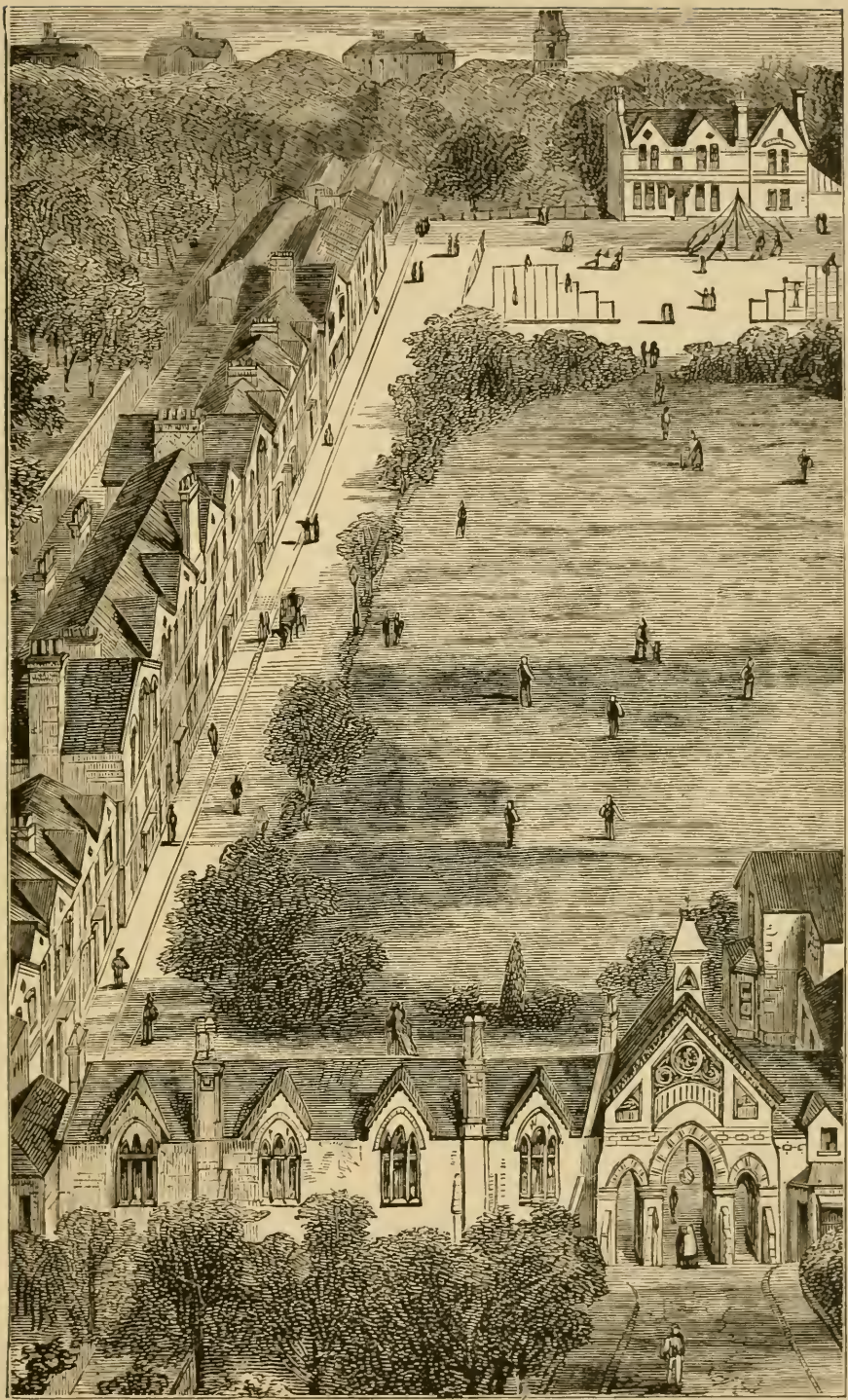
TRULY God leads his servants by ways that they know not. Mr. Spurgeon founded the Pastors' College because he saw an urgent need, though he knew not whence the means would come. The Orphanage exists largely because the means were pressed on him. He had mentioned in the "Sword and Trowel" several lines of Christian benevolence, and among them an Orphanage. Not long afterwards, in September, 1866, Mrs. Hillyard, a Baptist lady, the widow of a Church of England clergyman, wrote, proposing to give him twenty thousand pounds for the foundation of an orphanage for boys. Mr. Spurgeon, already over-burdened, was reluctant to undertake this new labor, and he urged Mrs. Hillyard to give the money for Mr. Müller's orphan houses on Ashley Downs, Bristol. But she had made up her mind, and Mr. Spurgeon after some discussion consented to carry out her plan. A Board of Trustees was formed, with Mr. Spurgeon as President. A location was selected at Stockwell, and negotiations begun for the purchase. The lodge of the Orphanage is on leased land; the lease contains a condition that, if the premises are ever used for "a tavern, or a tripe shop, or a conventicle, or any other nuisance," the lease becomes void. A prayer-meeting at the lodge would vitiate the lease.

Unfortunately, as it seemed, very providentially, as it turned out, when they were ready to push on the work the railroad bonds which constituted the gift of Mrs. Hillyard

were below par, and could only be sold at a great loss. It was decided to reserve them as an endowment, and to gather means for purchasing the grounds and building the cottages from other sources. The Tabernacle was enlisted in prayer and in sacrifice; the answers were wonderful. A gentleman of wealth, on his silver wedding, made his wife a gift of five hundred pounds. The lady, who had often been a helper of Mr. Spurgeon, gave the money toward one of the cottages. A gentleman handed Mr. Spurgeon's secretary an envelope containing six hundred pounds, refusing to have his name mentioned. The money was devoted to a second cottage. The story of the third cottage was most touching. The workmen who had been employed on the first two offered to give their work toward a third; and the employers promised the material. And so the Silver Wedding House, the Merchant's House and the Workmen's House were built, and, less than a year from the time of the first gift, the corner stones were laid, one by Mrs. Hillyard, one by Mr. Spurgeon, and one by Mr. Higgs, in behalf of the workmen. On that day, two thousand four hundred pounds was collected.

Seeing how wonderfully faithful God was to his promises, the trustees determined to put up eight cottages. Deacon Olney, one of the pillars of the Tabernacle, with his sons, gave a fourth, in memory of Mrs. Olney. The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland voted to give two; the Sunday-school of the Tabernacle gave another; the students at the Pastors' College gave an eighth, the corner stone of which was laid by Mrs. Spurgeon, who, though a constant invalid and sufferer, was wonderfully strengthened for that day.

The work continued with almost daily marks of God's



BOYS' HOME—STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE. Page 160.

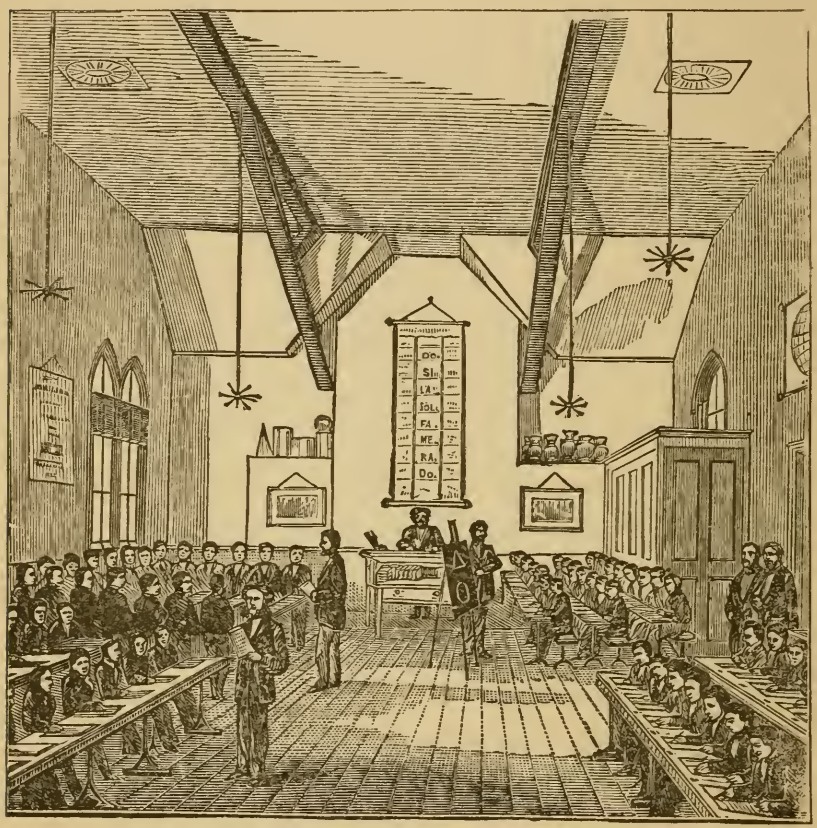
favor. The gift of money made to Mr. Spurgeon on his thirty-fourth birthday, he, with his habitual generosity, devoted to the Orphanage. Within two years from the time when the project was first entertained, the entire sum for building and furnishing the eight houses, ten thousand two hundred pounds, was pledged.

The same divine guidance and blessing which had been so plain in the original purpose and in the creation of means no less presided over the choice of a head master. Mr. Vernon J. Charlesworth, a member of the Tabernacle Church since 1874, has shown all the varied qualities which make him the kind, wise father of this large family. No doubt it was owing to his administrative ability, seconding the wise judgment of the founder, that the annual cost of the maintenance of each orphan is fourteen pounds ten shillings, while in several similar institutions it is twenty-nine pounds. But economy is not effected by any sacrifice of comfort, happiness, or health. Sometimes there has been need of close frugality; but there has never been want. The Orphanage is a home; the children are not institutionalized. They do not wear an antique outlandish garb, like the boys whose blue coats, set off with yellow leather belts, and always bare heads, mark them out in the streets of London as "Blue Coat Boys." They are dressed like other lads of their age. Mr. Charlesworth said:

"At a certain season of the year, the dealers all have remnants of excellent material which they are glad to sell at half price. In the winter, there are many tailors who are out of work, and who are glad to be employed at very low wages. So we get the clothes made of the best material and in the best manner, at the lowest rate, and with benefit

to all concerned. We find that the best is the cheapest in the end."

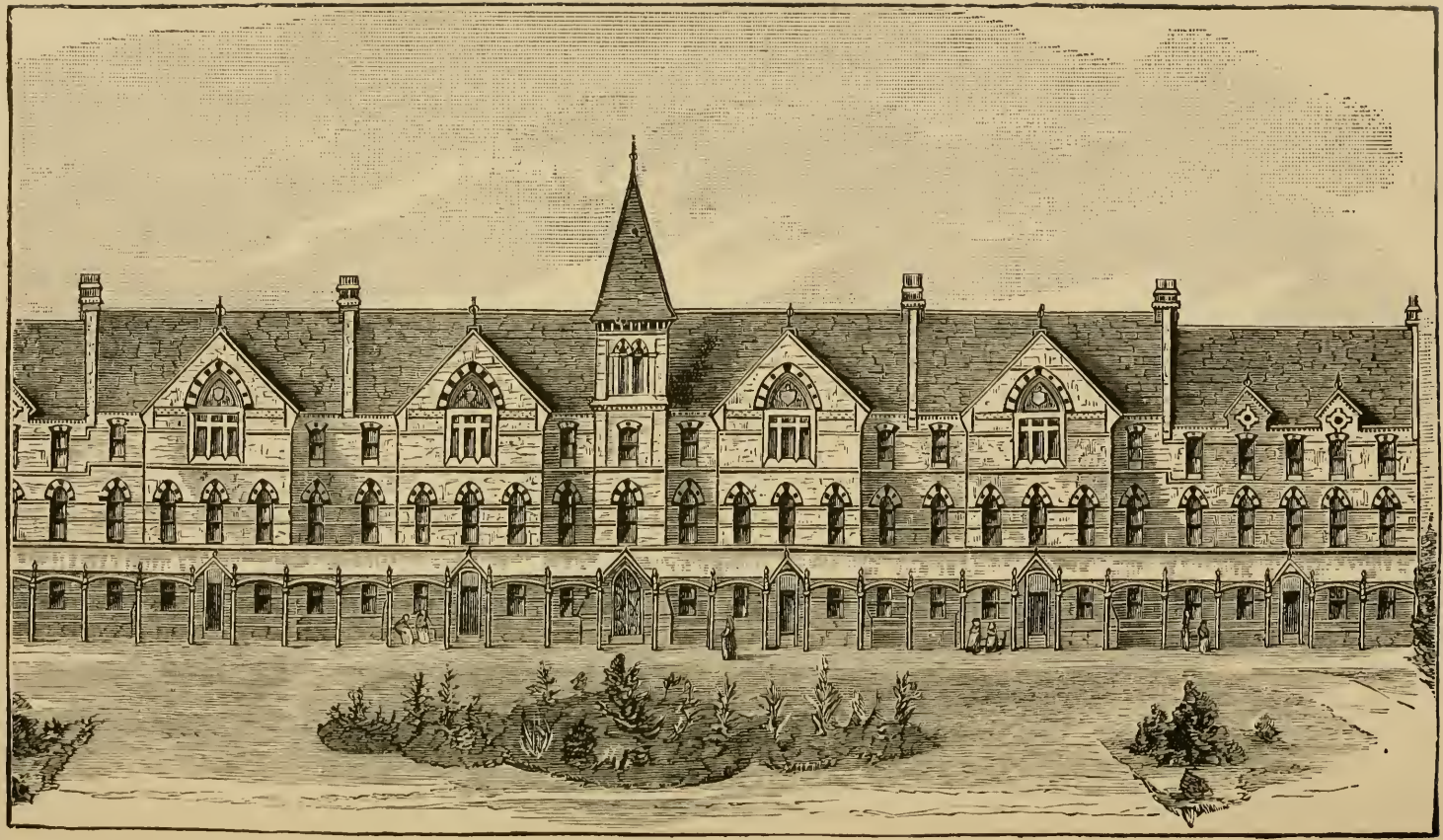
The boys attend school daily, and have a good English education. They are not taught any particular trade, but are trained to do just as they are bid; they are always in



One of the Schoolrooms.

demand in shops and work shops, and are often promoted by their employers. They are strongly attached to the Orphanage and very often give to it their first earnings.

Usually in England, interest is regarded in the admission of persons to charitable institutions. A person has a vote



THE GIRLS' HOME—STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

in the admission of candidates for each guinea of his annual subscription. A person wishing admission for herself or her child, goes from one patron or subscriber to another soliciting votes, and may thus spend money absolutely needed at home, and all in vain, if some one else can get more votes and interest. Thus, the more friends one has—that is, the less needy and destitute he is—the better his chance of being relieved. All is otherwise at Stockwell; no claim is considered but need. It is pitiable indeed to see a widow with three children go away unsuccessful in her application, because another with six children was more necessitous; but at least she has not spent her scanty means in canvassing for votes.

The Orphanage is strictly unsectarian in conferring its blessings. During its first twelve years, of five hundred and eighty-eight admitted, two hundred and four were of Church of England parentage, and one hundred and thirty-four of Baptist parentage.

Many of the boys have become Christians, and have been baptized. Some of them have entered the Pastors' College.

The judgment of every candid and intelligent observer is expressed in the words of two of the inspectors sent by the Local Government Board to visit the Orphanage: "An admirable institution, good in design, and, if possible, better in execution."

Success begets success. The logical conclusion from the "Boys' Orphanage" was the Girls' Orphanage. Every argument for the one was, at least, as urgent for the other. In 1879, gifts began to come in for a series of buildings for girls, Mr. Spurgeon, as usual, leading the way. A fine piece of land, lying adjacent, was purchased for four thousand pounds, and paid for. Then came gifts for "The

Reading House," "The Liverpool House," and others. Eight houses were erected on the opposite side of the quadrangle from the boy's row.

We quote from the letter of a visitor written in October, 1886:

Boys' Playground—Stockwell Orphanage. Page 167.

"On Monday Mr. Spurgeon wrote me:

"'Friday is my rest day; will you make it a Spurgeon day?'

"Of course, I was only too glad; so I agreed to meet him at the Orphanage at eleven o'clock. He added:

"'Make an engagement and then be sure and keep it, like an editor; for I am a horribly punctual person myself.'

"He has suffered much from a want of consideration in visitors with whom he had made appointments. So we were a few minutes early. We found at the Orphanage, Rev. Charles Spurgeon, his son, pastor at Greenwich, and Mr. Charlesworth, the head master. Mr. Spurgeon soon greeted us most heartily. As there was much to see, he did not let the grass grow under our feet. As he went from the office into the playground, cheer on cheer rose from the boys, as the burly frame of their friend, the father of the Orphanage, was recognized.

"We went first to the laundry; the machinery is all of the best. Mr. Spurgeon believes that whatever is done for God should be done perfectly. The girls were doing the ironing. Mr. Spurgeon had a pleasant word for each.

"The next cottage is the head master's house; the next is the staff building for the various officers. I need not remind you that there is not one vast building, but a series of cottages. It cost rather more at the start, but there is more family life; the children are more easily managed; a fire or a contagion could be kept within bounds, and then each cottage has its history; one is built by contributions of friends from Liverpool, and an inscription records the fact, and also the fact that the corner-stone was laid by Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, of Liverpool; another was erected to celebrate the silver wedding (though it has been a *golden* wedding from the start) of Mr. Spurgeon, and it has an inscription accordingly. The corner-stone of another was laid on his fifty-first birthday.

"We next went into one of the girls' cottages, holding

forty or fifty. Everything was neat and homelike. Then to the girls' schoolrooms, which occupied the upper story of two or three adjoining cottages. As we entered each room the girls welcomed Mr. Spurgeon with smiles and by clapping their hands. It made the tears come to my eyes again and again. Mr. Spurgeon spoke to the children, and

INFIRMARY—STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE. Page 169.

in each room he invited the visitor to say a word. He himself was happy and full of sportiveness. In one room the girls were at work upon arithmetic. Mr. Spurgeon said:

"'Now, suppose I should cut Dr. ——— in two [the visitor chances to be very lavishly endowed by nature in the

matter of body], right down lengthwise, what would that be like in arithmetic?'

"As there was no reply, he said:

"'Why, long division; and suppose I should cut him all up into little bits, what would that be? Would it not be fractions? And suppose I should walk off alone with Mr. and Mrs. Williams [the son-in-law and daughter of the visitor]; what rule would that be like? The rule of three, would it not?'

"The buildings are on the sides of an oblong square. The end nearest the street is occupied by the offices, laundry, and dining hall; in the opposite end are the infirmary, bath house, and play hall; on the right as you enter are the girls' cottages; on the left, the boys', with the gymnasium.

"There are no very sick children in the infirmary; but many are placed there when they come in, till they are free from all skin diseases and kindred annoyances. No sickly children are taken, though not seldom they have an inherited tendency to consumption.

"We next went into the gymnasium, where thirty or forty of the boys, under a teacher, went through a series of athletic exercises with vigor and skill. The boys wore athletic dresses which showed the development of the muscles and the proportions of the frame.

"Mr. Spurgeon believes, as I said, in doing the Lord's work *well;* and then, if the boys are strong, hale, athletic, agile, it is easy to get places for them; they are always in demand. The boys also are taught free-hand drawing and various useful arts. Best of all, they are taught to be prompt, cheerful, industrious. All through the Orphanage there is a wonderful blending of the most exalted faith and the most rugged common sense.

"Then there was an exhibition of bell ringing by some of the boys. They gave a March, 'Blue Bells,' the Westminster Chimes (including the booming of 'Big Ben') and 'Home, Sweet Home.' The entertainments given by the children are very popular. On a *fete* day, as on the birthday of Mr. Spurgeon, when an exhibition is given with a small charge for admission, there will be thirteen thousand persons present. And the boys, by entertainments throughout England, earn as much as ten thousand dollars a year.

"Every now and then one of the country churches holds a festival or harvest home and makes an offering to the Orphanage. One small church had just sent in several sacks of potatoes, turnips, nuts, apples, cabbages, pears, etc. But the apples were not such large, rosy, splendid apples as come from New England and Northern New York, and many parts of Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Ohio. I wonder if there are not some of my readers who would like to send a barrel or two of the *best* winter apples, *hand-picked, without a bruise*, each apple done up separately in corn husks or paper, to the Stockwell Orphanage, Clapham Road, London, S. W. But they must be prepaid through, and there must not be a doubtful apple among them. Only the best to the Lord!

"Then we went to the bakery. Much of the work is done by the boys. A four pound loaf is made to cost four pence. In the pantry was the carcass of a sheep just sent (frozen) from New Zealand as a gift.

"The girls have their meals in their several cottages; here, too, they cook and do their housework with only the ordinary conveniences.

"The boys take their meals in the large dining-hall; at

the end of each table a matron sits. After they were in their places, they sang, 'Let us with a gladsome mind.' I was pleased to observe that the first dish (which comes twice a week) was baked beans. This shows the spread of Boston ideas.

"I have spoken of the hale, vigorous looks of the children. The evident health is all the more noticeable when you consider that not a few of them came poorly fed and weakly. I have never seen a finer looking set of boys.

"Up to October 1, 1886, there had been: Boys received, 857; boys left, 617; present number, 240. Girls received, 273; girls left, 41; present number, 232. Total now in residence, 472. Total children received: Boys, 857; girls, 273; total, 1,130.

"One of the most interesting features is the inscriptions on the walls. One of them commemorates an orphan who became a missionary, and died in the service. Five of the boys have become ministers, of whom three went to the mission field.

"Pointing to one inscription, Mr. Spurgeon said:

"'There is our bank.' I read the words, 'The Lord will provide;' and, near by, the words: 'My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.'

"Mr. Spurgeon said:

"'This whole Orphanage is an argument for God. I say often to infidels, "Will you take this and carry it on for a month?"'"

The three motives leading Mr. Spurgeon to undertake the Orphanage were, desire to relieve suffering; a hope of enlisting the lads and girls in the service of God; and a zeal for the honor of God whose power and faithfulness

would be signally manifest in the success of a work begun and carried on in trust in him. Modifying the language of the brave old prophet of Jehovah, he has often proposed the test, "The God that answereth by orphanages, let him be God!"

The work has been to him its own exceeding great reward. Probably nowhere, outside of his own home, has he been more happy than within the walls of the Orphanage. Nowhere was his tenderness more strikingly expressed. We quote briefly from Mr. Gough's story of his visit:

As we entered the grounds, the boys set up a shout of joy at the sight of him. . . . He was like a great boy among boys. . . . "Will you go to the infirmary? We have one boy very ill of consumption; he cannot live; he would be disappointed if he knew I had been here, and had not seen him." In the cool, sweet chamber lay the boy. He was very much excited when he saw Mr. Spurgeon. Holding the boy's hand in his, he said:

"Well, my dear boy, you have some precious promises all around the room. Now, dear child, you are going to die; you are tired lying here; soon you will be free from all pain; and you will be at rest. Jesus loves you; he bought you with his precious blood, and he knows what is best for you. It seems hard for you to be here and listen to the shouts of the healthy boys outside at play. But soon Jesus will take you home, and then he will tell you the reason, and you will be so glad."

Then laying his hand on the boy's, without the formality of kneeling, he said: "O Jesus Master, this dear child is reaching out his thin hand to find thine. Touch him, dear Saviour, with thy living, warm clasp. Lift him as he passes the river, that his feet be not chilled by the cold water of death; take him home in thine own good time. Comfort and cherish him till that good time comes. Show him thyself as he lies here, and let him see thee more and more as his loving Saviour." After a moment's pause, "Now, my dear boy, is there anything you would like? Would you like a canary in a cage to hear him sing in the morning?

THE ALMSHOUSES. Page 175.

Nurse, see that he has a canary to-morrow morning. Good-bye, my dear boy; you will see the Saviour perhaps before I do."

I had seen Mr. Spurgeon holding by his power sixty-five hundred people in breathless interest; I knew him as a great man, universally esteemed and beloved; but, as he sat by the bedside of a dying child, he was to me greater and grander than when swaying the mighty multitude.

In fact, his greatness lay largely herein. It was in no small degree because he had the spirit which led him to sit and pray, holding the hand of a poor dying orphan, that he was able to sway the thousands. Cold intellect alone would never have made him the great preacher of the century. Knowledge puffeth up; love buildeth up.

That Mr. Spurgeon, while providing for the young, did not forget the old, was shown by the Almshouses for the aged and needy members of the Tabernacle, to which he gave five thousand pounds from the sum presented him on his silver wedding, and which have been removed from their old location and rebuilt near the Tabernacle and increased from six in number to eleven.

The Orphanage, the Almshouses, with many kindred enterprises testify to the humaneness and benevolence of the old Puritan doctrines; he that loves God loves his brother also.

CHAPTER XI.

AUTHORSHIP.

IT may awaken surprise if we say of a man, who was one of the most fruitful and widely read authors in history, that he was only incidentally an author. He was first of all a preacher; he was an author because he was a preacher. Many of his works are made up of his sermons, either pure and simple, or in some other form. And all have the same aim as sermons; they are designed to lead men into juster beliefs and higher lives.

The epigram of Charles James Fox, "Does the speech read well? Then it was not a good speech," like all epigrams, needs to be taken with a grain of salt. Fox himself, Webster, Choate, read well, yet the speeches were heard with enthusiastic delight; and we may add Mr. Spurgeon to the list.

Of course, the work of his life was "The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit," made up of the weekly issue of his sermons, beginning with January, 1855. The volume of the present year is XXXVIII. Up to the present date, March, 1892, the series contains two thousand two hundred and eighteen sermons. There are also in the hands of the publishers, Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster, a thousand or more sermons reported, but not yet published, so that the series can be continued for several years, if the public demand shall exist after the great personality has ceased as a living presence from among us.

It is often said "No one reads a sermon," and many persons have thought that the power of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons lay in his voice and in his personal magnetism alone. But this theory is set at naught by facts. The sermons, beginning with a circulation of ten thousand, attained to a regular circulation of twenty-five thousand, rising on some occasions much higher. We are prone to think of a published sermon as the ideal of dullness, but the sermons of Mr. Spurgeon carried with them, on the printed page, much of the power with which they were clothed, as they were heard in the Tabernacle. In the words of the Rt. Rev. W. Boyd Carpenter, D. D., Bishop of Ripon:

> The vast congregation which gathered at the Tabernacle, and the still vaster congregations who, in every quarter of the world, were readers of his sermons, are evidence of the industry and energy which kept his utterances fresh and crisp for more than thirty years.—("Contemporary Review," March, 1892.)

Of the popularity and power of the sermons, it is not easy to speak adequately. Fact outstrips what seems at first extravagance. If we call the average circulation twenty-five thousand, the aggregate circulation, up to this time, cannot be less than five and a half million. Wherever the English language goes, in regions where men have not heard of Gladstone, or Beaconsfield, or Grant, or Harrison, they have heard of Spurgeon. In America, and in all the English-speaking colonies, the sermons have attained a circulation that probably equals that of the original edition. If the copyright law had been passed forty years earlier, there is no knowing how many orphanages Mr. Spurgeon might have built. The sermons have been translated into Dutch, German, Welsh, Italian, French, Swedish, Danish, Greek, Spanish,

Gælic, Russian, Lettish, Servian, Hungarian, Maori, Arabic, Telugu, Urdu (Hindoostani), Syriac, and we know not what beside. To how many thousands on thousands of souls these leaves have been for healing, eternity alone can tell.

Also ten or more volumes of select sermons upon special classes of topics have appeared, as "Soul-winning Sermons," "Striking Sermons," "Christmas Sermons," "New Year Sermons," "Farm Sermons," "Types and Emblems," "Trumpet Calls," "Storm Signals," "The Present Truth," "The Royal Wedding." There have also been published several volumes of extracts from the sermons: "Gleanings Among Sheaves," and others.

Next in volume to "The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit," is "The Sword and Trowel, a Record of Combat with Sin and of Labor for the Lord" (monthly), which was begun in 1865, and of which twenty-seven annual volumes have appeared. Each number has contained one or more articles from Mr. Spurgeon, and every number has received his oversight. It has been devoted largely to spreading before the church the work done by the Tabernacle, and by the various agencies of which it was the center. One of its most characteristic features was the "Department of Book Notices," in which Mr. Spurgeon is all himself. His notices are candid, bold, discriminating, always unmistakable for approval or condemnation. Sometimes they are sarcastic, often humorous; always saying a great deal in a few words. The reader can but wonder how Mr. Spurgeon was able to read so much, notwithstanding the many burdens resting upon him, any one of which would have engrossed all the time and all the strength even of an extraordinary man.

On this point, William Wright, D. D., of London, Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, says, in a very striking article in "The Sunday School Times":

He was acquainted with all literature. His power of reading was perhaps never equalled. He would sit down to five or six large books, and master them at one sitting. He sat with his left hand on the left side of the book, and, pushing his right hand up the page on the right side of the book until the page became projected, he turned it over, and proceeded to the next page. He took in the contents almost at a glance, and his memory never failed him as to what he read. He made a point of reading half a dozen of the hardest books weekly, as he said he wished to rub his mind against the strongest; and there was no skipping. I often tested the thoroughness of his reading.

"Natural Law in the Spiritual World" reached him and me about the same time. I called on him fresh from a study of the book. He had just read it, with four or five other works, on that day. At tea we began to discuss the work. A third party disputed his recollection of certain points, whereupon Spurgeon quoted a page, to show that the natural and spiritual laws were declared to be "identical," and another important page to show how the book erred by defect. I looked over the page again, on my return home, and I believe he scarcely missed a word in his repetition. His power of reading was one of the greatest of his many talents.

There were men who, up to the last, called him uneducated, as there were men who called William III. a "Dutch boor," as there were men who called Abraham Lincoln "an imbecile." Dr. Wright says:

I was at first surprised to find Mr. Spurgeon consulting both the Hebrew and Greek texts. "They say," said he, "that I am ignorant and unlearned. Well, let them say, and in everything, by my ignorance and by my learning, let God be glorified."

Next in magnitude and in the labor demanded was

"The Treasury of David," a commentary upon the Psalms in seven large volumes. Though costing eight shillings a volume, and though largely addressing itself to plain people, ministers and laymen, this has reached a circulation of one hundred and twenty thousand volumes, besides we know not how many copies in America. This book was a work of love; he delighted in the Psalms. During twenty years he had given his time and the time of a secretary to looking up and transcribing, in the library of the British Museum, and elsewhere, every passage, from writers ancient and modern, which could illustrate the Psalms. He digested all these, made them his own, and wove them together with comments, often drawn from his own deep spiritual experience. When, at length, the work was closed, it was with sincere sorrow that he took his leave of the companion of so many hours:

"A tinge of sadness is in my spirit as I quit 'The Treasury of David,' never to find on earth a richer storehouse, though the whole palace of revelation is open to me. Blessed have been the days spent in meditating, mourning, hoping, believing, and exulting with David."

The character of this book, its compass and its completeness, illustrate his magnificent genius for hard work.

Probably the work which surpassed all others in popularity and circulation was the two volumes, "John Ploughman's Talk" and "John Ploughman's Pictures"; or, "Plain Advice for Plain People." Their circulation exceeded four hundred thousand. We do not know where in the world to find so much wisdom expressed with such wit. John Ploughman is as much superior to "Poor Richard" as the character of Spurgeon was more elevated than that of Franklin. The ploughman, in his smock frock, with his

whip under his arm, standing by his horse's head, talks to his neighbors with transparent and homely simplicity about frugality, industry, temperance, debt, marriage, the home, about gossip, the ale house, about God and the soul. Not a few conversions, not a few reformations have resulted from John Ploughman. We doubt if any among the many works of Mr. Spurgeon will have a longer life.

Closely akin to John Ploughman in its spirit is "John Ploughman's Almanac," a large broadside, adapted to be stuck on a cottage wall. It has a pithy maxim for each day in the year, with some terse counsel, secular, moral, religious, all illustrated with pictures which would gain a place in the popular heart.

"The Salt-Cellars," in two volumes, gives, in a permanent form, the proverbs which had been introduced in John Ploughman's Almanac during successive years, with homely notes upon them. The author says:

"The placing of a proverb for every day for twenty years has cost me great labor; and I feel that I cannot afford to lose the large collection of sentences which I have thus brought together."

These volumes, opened at random, show page after page of sharp, quaint, forcible proverbs. We do not know where to begin to quote; we should still less know where to leave off. Wit and wisdom are on every page, as, "Don't sniff at a bottle which had gin in it a year ago;" "Every pig can grunt;" "He who is short of grace thinks sermons long;" "If an ass goes a-traveling, he won't come home a horse;" "If every one would mend one, all would be mended;" "If every fool were crowned, we should all be kings;" "Buttons all right are a husband's delight;" "Be clean if you can't be clever;" "A tame

tiger is still a tiger;" "A handful of holy life is worth a ton of tall talk."

Another work abounding in gathered wit and wisdom was issued by him under the title of "Smooth Stones from Ancient Brooks." It is a collection of sentences from the writings of Rev. Thomas Brooks, a Puritan author of the Seventeenth Century, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Fish Street, London.

In "Spurgeon's Shilling Series," the author speaks in a plain, direct tone, on most important themes. It includes "The Clew of the Maze," "All of Grace," "According to Promise," "A Man in Christ," "The Claims of God," "First Things First," "A Catechism with Proofs."

Among his devotional books are, "The Saint and his Saviour," his first published volume;[1] "Morning by Morning, and Evening by Evening; or, Daily readings for the Family Closet;" "The Interpreter; or, Scripture for Family Worship;" "The Golden Alphabet of Praises of Holy Scripture;" "The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith," a collection of God's promises arranged for each day; also "Sermons in Candles."

Probably on nothing did Mr. Spurgeon expend more brain and heart than on the works intended for his students. "Lectures to My Students" are filled with the wisest counsel to young ministers, often lighted up with wit, and always irradiated with piety. He deems no subject too great or too small, if it may profit the young men. From the loftiest themes, he goes to counsels about the voice, about gestures, cautions against ungainliness.

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[1] It illustrates Mr. Spurgeon's modest estimate of himself that he sold the copyright of this book for £50, though £1,000 would have been a good bargain for the publisher.

The volume on "Commenting and Commentaries" embraces brief notices of one thousand four hundred and twenty-nine different commentators. The reading of these terse annotations makes us wonder anew how the author found the time to read these commentaries enough to enable him to speak of their merit or lack of merit. He had the gift of making minutes do the work of hours. The volume opens with two lectures on "Commentaries and Commentating" and closes with an address on "Eccentric Preachers."

"My Sermon Notes" (four volumes) will undoubtedly be very helpful, if they do not tempt young ministers to rely on Mr. Spurgeon instead of doing their own work. An eminent writer published in "The National Baptist" an article upon "The Evil Influence of Good Example," showing how prone men are to carry to excess their imitation of those whom they admire. A word to the wise is sufficient.

Mr. Spurgeon's last book, "Memories of Stambourne," contains recollections of the little village in Essex, where, in childhood, he spent many happy days with his grandfather. In the preface he says:

"I have done my best to let the reader see that even an humble village has its annals, and that these may be worthy of record."

But it is with sadness that one reads this little book. He says:

"In the end of May, 1891, I suffered from the virulent influenza then raging. But all thought I had recovered; and it was judged wise I should take a change of air. I went, for a few days, to the region near Stambourne, delighting myself in what I call 'my grandfather's country.' . . . But, on the Thursday of the week, an over-power-

ing headache came on, and I had to hurry home on Friday to go to that chamber wherein, for three months, I suffered beyond measure, and was often between the jaws of death. Now that I trust I am really recovering, I amuse myself with arranging what had been previously prepared, and with issuing it from the press."

Alas! that this hope was vain!

In addition to these and to a volume of "Speeches at Home and Abroad," there are numberless tracts and short pieces, among which his "Introduction to Norcott on Baptism" should not be forgotten.

No one can read even a list of his works without being impressed with the fact that, abundant as were his resources, he had them all well in hand, and amazed at the amount he accomplished. And the amazement grows when he considers that this work was done in such unoccupied moments as were left him by the pastorate of the Tabernacle, by "the care of all the churches," by the College and the Orphanage, and by almost daily paroxysms of agony. On almost the last occasion when the writer heard him speak, in his address to the London Association, October, 1886, he said:

"By three o'clock this afternoon, my rheumatic gout will come on with such violence that I shall have to drop everything and go to bed."

That he achieved so much was due to his own unconquerable will, sustained by the grace of God.

It is perhaps proper to say a word of the relation of Mr. Spurgeon to Hymnology. In 1866, he prepared "Our Own Hymn Book," intended especially for the Tabernacle. Dr. Burrage, in his valuable work on "Baptist Hymn Writers," says:

"To this admirable collection Mr. Spurgeon's own contributions were fourteen psalms and ten hymns, with three which he had altered. Of the hymns, a favorite is that which commences:

"Sweetly the holy hymn
Breaks on the morning air;
Before the world with smoke is dim,
We meet to offer prayer."

But the hymn by Mr. Spurgeon, which he himself liked best, and which has become best known, is the following:

"The Holy Ghost is here
Where saints in prayer agree;
As Jesus' parting gift, he's near
Each pleading company."

CHAPTER XII.

MR. SPURGEON AS I SAW HIM.

W. E. HATCHER, D. D.[1]

FREQUENTLY, when I was with Mr. Spurgeon, it interested me greatly to observe with what reverence and delicacy he was always treated. There was nothing of the noisy character of an ovation. Every one seemed subdued by his presence and accorded him a respect that was almost suggestive of worship. I sat with him in a carriage one Sunday, and while we rolled over Clapham Road, the swarms of his people, on the way, seemed instinctively to pause, and to be made inexpressibly happy by the smallest token of his recognition. With what tender grace he greeted them I could never forget. I accompanied him in some of his journeys, and entered with him into a number of private homes. Everywhere he received the most reverential consideration. Indeed, I had a fancy at times that he was unconsciously oppressed by these attentions. He had the simplicity of a child, and did not ask to be hailed as great.

With no undue familiarity and yet in a candid, outright way, I made quite free with him, took issue with him, rebelled against his decisions, made such retorts as I could to his humorous hits, and treated him as I would have treated many of my less distinguished friends. He not only took

[1] Rev. Dr. Hatcher, the eminent pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia, during his visit to England in 1888, was favored with unusual opportunities of seeing Mr. Spurgeon, and, at the request of the author, has kindly written this chapter of reminiscences.

it in good part, but seemed to relish it. He had my fullest love, and knew that I could not be intentionally offensive, and I drifted to the conclusion that he gave me so much of his time, in part at least, because he liked to have a man who treated him like common folk.

Almost every stranger who approached him was eager to testify in the most grateful terms to the good that he had received from his ministry. Quite often I went into his office, in the rear of his pulpit, after the services in the Tabernacle, when he would admit strangers. What multitudes swarmed into the halls and passages, and waited for the honor of grasping him by the hand! It was a long line that filed by him twice on every Sunday. With some it was a moment of undisguised pride and honor long coveted; they expressed this happiness and moved on. One elegant and attractive gentleman, with a tear in his voice, told him how the last days of his mother had been gladdened by reading his sermons. Another, in a single sentence, expressed his everlasting obligation for having been helped in finding Christ by one of his sermons.

Mr. Spurgeon worked all the time under weights. It is doubtful whether he had one moment of absolute freedom from pain for years of his later life.

Rheumatic gout was the supreme affliction of his life. I suppose it grew worse and worse. I remember, with undimmed vividness, the first Sunday morning in August, 1888, on which I entered the Tabernacle. I had an almost childish curiosity to see him. My first impressions were saddened by the marks of suffering on his face, and by the confessions of weakness and pain which were heard in his prayers. Afterward, among many other things which he told me, he said that he suffered sorely from the swellings

of his feet and hands. Upon leaving his bed in the morning he would have much difficulty in using his feet. They would be much swollen and acutely sensitive to touch, and he had to rub and use them by degrees until he could stand upon them. As a fact his gait was slow and unsteady, and not unfrequently he had falls that were painful and dangerous.

He knew not how deeply he touched my heart as he pictured to me the suffering of his right hand. Often when he waked in the morning, his right hand was as rigidly locked as if it had been petrified. Not a joint could be unbent by the force of its own muscles. He had to take it finger by finger, and joint by joint, and so work and loosen its machinery as to restore it to action. The memory of that hand may well stimulate suffering saints not to faint in their toils.

On account of his rheumatic ailments, he had to be exceedingly watchful of his health. He was liable to be injured by bad air or improper food. To get rid of the London damps and fogs, he went every fall for several months to Southern France. He was a strict vegetarian. One Sunday, I dined with him at the home of one of his members. He sat next to the lady of the house. She presided over a dish of pheasants, and during the meal I discovered a small slice on his plate. Without looking his way, I remarked that, of all the people on earth, the Americans must be the most stupid.

"Why so, my brother?"

"Why, they labor under the hallucination that a pheasant does not belong to the vegetable kingdom; but, as in this country vegetarians eat pheasants, my people are scientifically belated."

"You Americans are generally right; but this good lady laid the pheasant on my plate, and I really believe it is the first taste of meat I have had for two years." He had to guard carefully against anything that would tend to fatten him and he used "saccharine" instead of sugar for sweetening his coffee. His pleasures in eating were narrowly limited.

There was nothing striking in his physique except his head. He was about five feet eight inches in height, inclined to superfluous flesh and by no means graceful. Taking tea with him once, I congratulated him upon finding Mrs. Spurgeon so much more robust than I had feared. His reply was:

"Ah, my poor wife is all lilies and no roses." Then he remarked that there was one point in providence upon which he could get no light, that was that the Lord had created him so homely. He said that his father was accounted a handsome man, and as for his grandfather, he stood "a man among men."

His mind was self-poised and thoroughly mastered in all its forces. Every power seemed to be fully equipped and always on duty. His mind never halted under any new pressure. In the Sunday procession which passed by to get his handshake, one of the names presented was that of Dr. J. R. Kendrick. Instantly his face brightened:

"Have I the honor of shaking the hand of the Dr. Kendrick who gave us the charming biography of the last Mrs. Judson?"

The doctor frankly admitted that he was not the author, but his brother, Dr. A. C. Kendrick, and received many words of fraternal compliment and affection.

A friend in New York had kindly sent Mr. Spurgeon a

note that I would be in London during the summer. Several brethren were with me as, one Sunday morning, I approached him in the midst of the long procession. The brother immediately in front of me called my name. Instantly he said:

"I have read about you, and I would like to know you." He never suffered for lack of a name or of a word.

The goodness of Mr. Spurgeon was incomparably charming. He never could have been the preacher that he was if he had not been so spotless, simple-minded, and transparent. He had gathered no trappings of earthly glory. He hated sham with infinite loathing, and loved the truth as the eye loves light. An atmosphere of devoutness encircled him.

A party of American gentlemen spent the day with him at Westwood. They saw him in his freest and happiest mood, and heard him talk for hours about the "Down Grade" contest, then at the fiercest. That he was in the midst of a great conflict, he well knew, and that a number of his friends were seeking to play a double part was more than he could hide from himself. Whatever the right or wrong of the controversy, he suffered some grievous wrongs. It was a thrilling experience to hear him discuss the situation in his own impassioned way. He was no velvet-fingered fighter for his Lord. With his right hand, he struck the opposition many terrific blows, and his defense of what he believed to be the truth was the soul of eloquence.

But in all the glow of his passion and the vigor of his utterance there was no venom; he was full of love and had bitterness for none. The spirit which he displayed was so lofty, magnanimous, Christ-like, that when the Americans, at six o'clock, left Westwood, their only topic was Mr.

Spurgeon's ineffable gentleness and nobility. They knew before that he was great, but not until then how childlike and good he was.

In many meetings and often extended interviews, I never detected anything which suggested the slightest consciousness of greatness, or the least disposition to disparage others. Before the Lord, he was as a little child, trembling with weakness and full of praise; before men he was ready to help the weakest and to love those who despitefully used him. His nature was imperial; he commanded by a right which few could question. He had the magnetism to attract, the wisdom to understand, the tact to combine, and the force to impel them.

Those who knew Mr. Spurgeon most intimately regret that so much has been said about his position on the "Communion Question." It can hardly be truthfully maintained that he had any position on that subject, in its controversial aspects. His mind was so deeply absorbed in other views of truth, that he never gave a critical study to the "Communion Controversy." At least, he never made any deliverances on this subject that could be accepted as authoritative.

Since his death, earnest efforts have been made to use him to the injury of American Baptists. I know that this would not be in harmony with his own spirit.

During my stay in London, I had many frank and unrestrained conversations with him. On two occasions we talked quite freely with reference to the "Communion Question." As these interviews were in no sense confidential, I will carefully reproduce, in substance, what he said.

The first conversation took place in his study at Westwood, where, on August 11, 1888, with Dr. Henry McDonald, of Atlanta, Georgia, and Rev. L. R. Thornhill, of

Manchester, Virginia, I spent five hours in his company. He seemed to be unusually free from pain, and displayed more buoyancy and freshness than usual. The "Communion Question" was brought up by the remark of one of us that, at the administration of the Lord's Supper a few nights before at the Tabernacle, he gave no invitation to outsiders of any name. He replied that that was true at that time, but that at other times he did give invitations, which included some who were not Baptists. One of us also expressed regret that the English and American Baptists were not in harmony on this question; and he was asked to give his reasons for inviting those whom he regarded as unbaptized to the Lord's Table. He understood thoroughly that the request was not made in the spirit of contention, but with a sincere desire to understand his views as well as his practice.

It would not be possible for me to forget his answer, for it broke upon me as something quite novel in the history of the controverted question. He said that he gave the invitation "*very largely as a matter of hospitality.*" He must have observed the surprise with which this statement was received, for he made haste to explain what he meant. He said that many strangers attended the Tabernacle, and, as many of them were far away from home, he felt that it was hospitable on his part to invite them to the Supper. The impression left upon me by his remark was about the same as if he had said, that, if one were at his house when the dinner bell rang, he would feel it incumbent on him to invite the visitor to his table, but that he was not keeping an open house.

He was also quite particular in explaining the regulations which his church had adopted with reference to outside

persons coming to the Lord's Table. No one could go to the Table without a ticket. If persons came more than once, they were asked if they did not wish to be introduced to the pastor. At their third coming, if they were not willing to join the church, they were urged to seek membership elsewhere.

He added with evident zest that often those who came to the Lord's Table gladly accepted an introduction to him, and that, in very many cases, after talking with them on baptism, he had the pleasure of baptizing them.

Nothing was more apparent in this conversation than his intense belief in immersion as alone constituting Christian baptism. Indeed, I have not heard any man talk, who impressed me as being a more sincere and uncompromising believer in immersion. Ministers and others who are quick to use him for striking the Baptists on the "Communion Question" ought to be candid enough to let people know where he stood on the subject of baptism.

Mr. Spurgeon's church does not admit any members who have not been immersed. It is for people who quote him to say whether there is any more bigotry in shutting out the unbaptized from the Lord's Table than there is in denying them membership in our churches.

Mr. Spurgeon's "hospitality" argument must strike others as it did those of us present on the occasion, as utterly unsatisfactory. It was simply a sentimental prompting, and did not really touch the great questions which cluster around the Lord's Supper. It also showed that he utterly ignored the popular grounds upon which "Open Communion" is practiced.

In the following October, being again in London, I was invited to accompany Mr. Spurgeon on a visit to Leyton-

stone, where he dedicated a new house of worship, and near which we spent the night together. Except when asleep, we were constantly together for over twenty-four hours, and during much of that time no other persons were present. It gave me an opportunity of drawing him out on various subjects by many candid questions, every one of which he answered with childlike simplicity and courtesy. While traveling on the train, I somewhat playfully expressed my wish to see some strict, well-rounded Baptists before I left England, and asked him if there were any Baptists of that type in London. He quickly replied:

"Why, yes, a multitude of them."

When I inquired further, if they had any churches of their own, he said:

"I suppose that they have at least one hundred churches in this city," adding, that he was constrained to say that many of them were not very progressive, but that they were composed of really good people.

He took evident pleasure in giving me such instructions as would enable me to find some of the leading "Close Communion" Baptists of London. Some of these brethren I had the honor of meeting, and found them to be among the noblest of God's people. They spoke in the highest terms of Mr. Spurgeon, and said that in his heart he was really with them. Dr. Edward Parker, President of the Manchester Baptist College, when in America in 1889, said that Mr. Spurgeon was hardly looked upon in England as an "Open Communionist." Mr. Spurgeon said of himself:

"As compared with the bulk of English Baptists, I am a 'Strict Communionist,' as my church fellowship is strictly of the baptized."

During the conversation, on our way to Leytonstone, I

referred to the report that he had spoken bitterly against the "Close Communion" Baptists of America. He said that he was aware that such an evil report had been put in circulation against him, and declared that it was utterly impossible for him ever to have said any such thing. He admitted that it was impossible for him to remember everything that he had ever said, but added that he knew what was in his heart, and that there was nothing there that would prompt such harsh criticisms against any. He was evidently pained beyond measure that his American brethren should have been wounded by a misrepresentation so willful and causeless.

"I have," he said, "not one word of unfriendly criticism to utter against my Baptist brethren beyond the Atlantic. . . . If I were to come to America to live, I would join a 'Close Communion' church, and conform myself to its practices in regard to the Lord's Supper."

He said that it was impossible for an outsider fully to understand the Baptist situation in England. Even the little that I saw and heard convinced me that American Baptists need to exercise charity and forbearance toward their English brethren. They have persecutions and complications to which we are strangers; if they do not hold all of the distinctive views for which we stand, we ought, at least, to rejoice for such testimony in favor of the truth as they are so nobly bearing.

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. SPURGEON'S JUBILEE.

OFTEN the Lord permits his servants to spend a lifetime of labor seeing little of reward or encouragement, upheld only by the word and promise of Jehovah. So he dealt with Mackay of Uganda, and with other holy men who "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off." But sometimes he permits his servants to drink of the brook in the way, to see of the desire of their souls, to behold the glory of the Lord in the land of the living. This joyous experience the Lord granted in rich measure to his servant, Mr. Spurgeon.

Thursday, June 19, 1884, the fiftieth birthday of Mr. Spurgeon, was celebrated by the church and by his many friends, as his Jubilee. Unable to crowd into a single day the expression of their joy and affection, they began the service on Wednesday evening. Perhaps we cannot better introduce the story of these two days than from the "Pall Mall Gazette" of June 19:

"There is an Essex bumpkin," once remarked one of the most eminent of our men of letters, who could certainly never be accused of any theological sympathy with the pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, "who came up from the country thirty years ago, and by his own single, unaided energy has done more for the civilization and Christianization of Southern London than all the archbishops and bishops of the Establishment." It is no common work that elicited such an encomium, nor is it a common man whose fiftieth birthday is celebrated this week as a kind of religious jubilee.

The most surprising thing to most people will be the

discovery that Mr. Spurgeon is only fifty years old. He has been so constantly before the public for so many years that the first impression on most minds on hearing of his jubilee is that it is a celebration of the fiftieth year of his ministry, not the fiftieth of his life. But Mr. Spurgeon is in reality only fifty years old, although for thirty years he has been one of the best known men of the time. At first, he was a curiosity, then a notoriety, but he has long since been recognized as one of the first celebrities of his day.

His position is absolutely unique. Of all the ministers, Established or Non-established, in the metropolis, whose names were familiar when Mr. Spurgeon came up from the country, not one now survives, and there is at the present day no man who, whether for universal popularity or solid work, can hold a candle to the "Essex bumpkin." Seldom has any life more remarkably successful been lived for thirty years before the eyes of all men, with such uninterrupted good fortune. Other men have had vicissitudes, reverses, disasters. Mr. Spurgeon's only vicissitudes have arisen from his continually increasing influence. He has had anxiety, no doubt, as other men; but it has only been the anxiety of growth, never the misery of decline. His church has increased and multiplied, and institution after institution has grown up under its fertilizing shade; one enterprise after another has demanded his services, and nothing has failed. Everything, whether it be an orphanage or a magazine, a tabernacle or a college, has prospered under his hands. The real Bishop of South London, he is also one of the most voluminous and popular authors of our time; the head of a College which has sent out five hundred students into the ministry; the founder and maintainer of an Orphanage in which four hundred orphans find a comfortable home, the director of a Colportage Association, the Editor of a magazine, and the Presiding Engineer of the pent-up energies of a church of five thousand members. Add to this a personal popularity so great as only to be measured by the virulence of the abuse over which it has triumphed, and we need no other explanation of the enthusiasm of the jubilee which is celebrated to-day.

In 1853, when he came to London, the London Baptist Association had thirty-two churches, with four thousand

one hundred and ten members; there were in England one thousand one hundred and thirty-four Baptist churches, with one hundred and six thousand four hundred and forty-eight members. In 1884, there were in the Metropolitan Association, which, as we understand it, corresponds to the London, two hundred and thirty-one churches, with two hundred and eighty-one chapels, and forty-six thousand four hundred and ninety-seven members; and in England at large, there were two thousand nine hundred and twenty-six churches, with two hundred and nineteen thousand four hundred and fourteen members. It is entirely safe to say that this large progress had been due, in great measure, to the impulse which the denomination had received from the labors and from the success of Mr. Spurgeon.

Nor was it alone upon his public labors that the blessing of God rested. God's smile was no less upon his home. His marriage, to which we have already referred, proved the source of unmeasured blessing to him and to all who were brought under his far-reaching influence. Rarely has a wife more amply realized the almost inspired ideal.

> A being breathing thoughtful breath,
> A traveler between life and death;
> The reason firm, the temperate will,
> Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill:
> A perfect woman, nobly planned,
> To warn, to comfort, and command;
> And yet a Spirit still, and bright
> With something of an angel light.

The fact that Mrs. Spurgeon still survives forbids us to speak, as we gladly would, of her graces of character, of her womanly gentleness, of her divine affection, of all the high qualities which made her his counterpart and helper. The only shadow that rested upon his home was the extreme

and prolonged physical feebleness of Mrs. Spurgeon. But, in answer to earnest prayer, offered at his especial request, her suffering has been for some years much alleviated, and she was able, to the surprise and joy of her many friends, to be present at the Jubilee.

Mr. Spurgeon's twin sons, Charles and Thomas, born in 1856, were both baptized in youth, upon the same day, and both devoted themselves to the ministry. Charles became the successful pastor of the Church in Greenwich, London. Thomas, who is far from rugged in constitution, is unable to endure the fog and dampness of London, and has resided for many years at the antipodes. He is now laboring most efficiently in New Zealand, and has been able only occasionally to make a brief visit home, though soon compelled to return to his distant field.

Years before, in compliance with the earnest suggestion of Mr. Spurgeon, who was oppressed with the increasing burden of care and labor which attended upon enlarging success, the church had called as co-pastor, his brother, Rev. James Archer Spurgeon, who devoted his great executive ability to the management of the business of the Tabernacle and of the College, and who, in the occasional absences of the pastor, filled the pulpit very acceptably, affording thus to the older brother a welcome and much needed relief.

On the evening of Wednesday, the day before the Jubilee, the Tabernacle was crowded almost to suffocation. When Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon came upon the platform they were greeted with irrepressible enthusiasm, the rare presence of Mrs. Spurgeon giving an added joy to the evening. The immense audience rose to their feet in reverence, affection, and welcome. Mr. Spurgeon was also accom-

panied by his venerable father, Rev. John Spurgeon, by his brother and co-pastor, Rev. James A. Spurgeon, and by his son, Rev. Charles Spurgeon. At the request of Mr. Spurgeon, two brethren representing the deacons and the elders offered prayer for the divine blessing on all the exercises of the two days.

As Mr. Spurgeon arose, he was greeted with renewed applause. Speaking with deep feeling, in his own homely and familiar and, at times, humorous way, he said:

"I feel overwhelmed with gratitude to you, and because of you to God. I cannot speak much, especially after the kind things which many of you have said to me. I have much to do not to cry; indeed, I have had a little distillation of the eyes quietly but I try to keep myself all right."

He then expressly referred all the successes at the Tabernacle to "the glorious work of the Holy Spirit." He utterly disclaimed all credit to himself for "the great and long continued success." "Our American friends are generally very cute judges. They say, over and over again, 'Why, he is no orator! We have scores of better preachers than Mr. Spurgeon in America; but he preaches the gospel as some of our celebrated men do not preach it.' I have tried to saturate our dear friends with the doctrines of grace. I defy the devil himself to get that out of you, if God, the Holy Spirit, once puts it into you.

"Death to fine preaching; there is no good in it. All the glory of words and the wisdom of men will certainly come to naught. But the simple testimony of the good will of God to men and of his sovereign choice of his own people, will stand the test, not only of the few years during which I have preached it, but of all the ages of this world till Christ shall come.

"I do not believe that the dry, dead doctrine of some men could ever have evoked such sympathy in men's hearts as my gospel has aroused in yours. . . . I cannot see anything about myself that you should love me. I would not go across the street to hear myself preach. But I dare not say more upon that point, because my wife is here. It is the only point upon which we decidedly differ. I thank you with all my heart for your generous esteem."

Mr. J. W. Harrald, Mr. Spurgeon's private secretary, read a list of institutions, sixty-six in number, centering about the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

Mr. Spurgeon then called on Mr. Moody, thanking God for "raising him up and sending him to England to preach the gospel to great numbers with such plainness and power."

Mr. Moody, who was deeply moved, spoke of the great debt he owed Mr. Spurgeon.

"While I was here, I followed Mr. Spurgeon everywhere. When people at home asked me if I had gone to this and that cathedral, I had to say 'no.' But I can tell them something about Mr. Spurgeon's meetings."

Deacon D. W. Carr read an elaborate address to Mr. Spurgeon on behalf of the church. Mr. Spurgeon said:

"It is a great mercy I am not expected to speak after that."

The pastor then introduced his venerable father, Rev. John Spurgeon, seventy-three years of age, who said:

"God's love has made me happy; and he has indeed been embodied love to raise up two such sons as I have. God bless this church, the Orphanage, the College, and all the institutions."

"I did not originally choose him as my father," Mr. Spurgeon said, "but if it had been left to me I would have

chosen no other. And now comes my brother. If there is a good man on the earth, I think it is my brother."

Pastor James A. Spurgeon said:

"There is no one in the world who has so good a brother as I have. The esteem in which I have held him has only been equalled by the love I bear him. I consider it the greatest honor God could have conferred upon me to make me co-partner in my brother's work. A grander leader no man could possibly desire. The secret of my brother's success, so far as I have solved it, is prayer. I shall have to add, I do not know anybody who works harder than my brother. A great deal of my brother's success is due to his geniality."

Mr. Spurgeon then introduced his son, Rev. Charles Spurgeon, who said:

"Dear friends, I am here to-night to speak for two, for we are as one, Charlie and Tommie. . . . I have gone into my father's study and sat at his feet to learn many a time, but I never could open my mouth before him. When he said, 'Charlie, what are you going to preach from?' I wished I could get to the other side of the door as quickly as possible, for I was afraid. If I told him the text, he would want to know what the divisions were, and would probably say that the middle one was wrong."

Mr. Spurgeon then introduced his pupil and friend, Rev. Archibald G. Brown, who referred to the sermon of Mr. Spurgeon which led him to Christ.

"Twenty-three years ago to-morrow I was baptized by Mr. Spurgeon on this lower platform. . . . Mr. Spurgeon has given all in the College a passion for souls. Above all things, we desire that God will make us the means of winning many to the Saviour."

Addresses were presented from the students of the College, from the Tabernacle Sunday-school, and from the Baptist ministers of France.

The evening was closed with prayer by Mr. Spurgeon. "Thy servants remember dark days and times of need and great difficulty when we had nothing to stay ourselves upon except our God; and we never were better stayed. Never were we happier; never was there an intenser joy in our spirit than when we felt we were out of our depth, and yet could not drown, but could safely swim."

On Thursday evening, June 19, the Earl of Shaftesbury presided. A list was read of the various societies represented and of addresses, letters, and telegrams received.

Earl Shaftesbury then spoke of "Our admirable, our invaluable friend, Charles Haddon Spurgeon. . . . You see him now as he began: the same true, simple man that he was, not puffed up by success, but rather humbled by it. . . . What a powerful administrative mind our friend possesses is shown by the list which has been read of the societies and associations constructed by his genius. . . . A kinder, better, honester, nobler man never existed on the face of the earth. . . . We wish and pray that the rest of his life may be according to its beginning: that he may go on increasing in service, in depth of feeling, in winning souls to the Lord."

Canon Basil Wilberforce (grandson of *the* Wilberforce) was the next speaker, and was followed by J. W. Todd, D. D., on behalf of the London Baptist Association. O. P. Gifford, D. D., presented an address from the Baptist ministers of Boston.

Rt. Hon. Sir William MacArthur, M. P., formerly Lord

Mayor, made an address, and was followed by Rev. Newman Hall.

Mr. Olney, of the Tabernacle, presented the Spurgeon Jubilee Fund, of four thousand five hundred pounds, which Mr. Spurgeon distributed among the various enterprises of the Tabernacle, as he had done the gift of six thousand two hundred and forty-eight pounds given him in 1879, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his settlement.

And so, amid mutual love, amid mutual blessings without number, amid the assurance of salvation and the enjoyment of present service, the jubilee closed.

At this point, after witnessing the great results of the first thirty-one years of his ministry, it is perhaps proper to ask the oft-repeated question, "What was the secret of his success?" It is true, life is essentially a mystery. We can explain the power of the steam engine by the expansion of steam; we know how many volts are necessary to accomplish certain results by the electric motor; but the germination and the maintenance of life, physical or spiritual, pass our comprehension. Yet it may not be in vain to ask the question. Even if the answer be but approximate and inadequate, it may have its lesson.

First of all, we put the explanation where Mr. Spurgeon always put it, in the blessing of God. This blessing of God was conveyed in the bestowment of the Holy Spirit. And this gift was granted in answer to prayer. He lived in an atmosphere of prayer; he was always in a state of mind to which prayer was not incongruous, but natural. As he was walking one day with Dr. Hoyt through the woods, they came to a fallen tree; Mr. Spurgeon said, "Let us pray here," as if he had said, "Let us sit down and rest." And

his prayers had a man behind them. God does not regard anonymous prayers any more than sensible men regard anonymous letters. There was a man, spiritual, hallowed, self-sacrificing, in earnest. And he was acquainted with God. He knew God by heart, as a man knows his friend. He knew how to address him; how to prevail with him.

All this on the divine side, or on the divine-human. But when God acts through a man, it is because he is a man through whom God can act, because he has certain qualities either by nature or by divine endowment.

We have already spoken, every one has spoken, of his marvelous voice. That he had an enormous capacity for labor, every reader of these pages must be aware, unless we have written in vain. He was a miracle of clearness of diction and directness in speech. He had the moral bravery which enabled him to stand alone with all the world on the other side. A man who has passed beyond fear is a man who cannot be left out in our reckoning.

He believed. Everything was a reality. When he was in his study, when he went into the pulpit, everything was a reality. He stood as God's representative to man, and as man's representative to God. The man who believes every word he says is a power. God works sometimes through narrow-minded men, sometimes through weak men, but always through men who believe.

He had that magnetism which sends its currents through an audience, which is often a power for evil, but which, when sanctified, is one of Heaven's greatest gifts. He loved, and love is the great power in the universe. He had the power of organization, which enabled him to multiply himself, and to get out of every one associated with him the utmost that was in him.

"Any fool," said Dr. J. A. Broadus, "can work himself; it takes a wise man to get work out of other people."

His ear was always bent to hear what God had said through his word. The book was not centuries and millenniums old: it was fresh. His interpretations were his own.

Every soldier knows the difference between a concentric fire and a diverging fire. All his powers were trained and concentrated upon one single point, not his own reputation, not some coveted position, but the salvation of men. He achieved that great victory for want of which so many gifted preachers are almost a failure. He absolutely forgot himself. This self-forgetfulness spoke in every word, expressed itself in every tone. He was never oratorical. He was never declamatory. His tone was that of the most earnest conversation, quiet, yet penetrating and far-reaching.

And the whole man—powers, affections, reason, pathos, humor—all were presented a living sacrifice, as if he would realize what God could make of a man absolutely and without reserve devoted to his service.

And he preached the old doctrines which, let men say what they will, have the power to reach men's hearts and to mold men's lives—the old doctrines, whose power has been shown in the dying chamber, in the strength of manhood, on the field of battle, in the lonely cell, at the martyr's stake, the doctrines which made Bunyan and Cromwell, Whitefield and Wesley, Knox and Havelock, Luther and Coligny.

CHAPTER XIV.

NONCONFORMITY—THE DENOMINATION—"DOWN GRADE."

THE religious question in Great Britain is that of the liberation of religion from State support and State control. It is not at all a question of the personal character of the State clergy, or, necessarily, of the quality of the religious teaching imparted by them. The question is, "Shall the State tax all its citizens to maintain the ministers of any one form of religion, a form which is professed, perhaps by a half of the people, perhaps by a minority, possibly by an insignificant minority?" And, still further, "Shall the State make the church, which is thus established, a means of inflicting social and political oppression and educational disability upon all who have the manhood to avow their conscientious dissent from the polity, the forms, or the doctrines of the church thus by law established?"

It is nothing to the purpose to say that there are among the clergy thus sustained by the State many polished gentlemen, many erudite scholars, many devout Christians. And it is liable to arouse emotions inconsistent with gospel meekness when the dignitaries in State and Church, after shutting out through generations and centuries the Nonconformists from the great universities and from social amenities and from the smiles of the court, then say, "You are not educated; you are not cultivated; you are not gentlemen."

Descended from generations of Nonconformists; having

in his veins the blood of the men who fought beside the Ironsides, and in his soul the doctrines of the Puritans; endowed with a rugged sense of independence; incapable of submitting to unjust dictation; intent upon studying the Bible for himself; animated by a justice that impelled him to give to all the rights which he claimed as his own,—there could be no question as to the position which Mr. Spurgeon would hold as to Nonconformity. In fact, he himself, as also every step in his career, was an argument. Shut out from Oxford and Cambridge, God had made him the first preacher of his time. Under his lead, a church destitute of wealth had erected a house of worship which was the centre of Christian influences incomparably greater than radiated from St. Paul's and Canterbury and Rochester, and, we do not hesitate to say, from all the cathedrals in the kingdom. Mr. Spurgeon, the Tabernacle, the Pastors' College, the sermons and books going forth by the million to all the world,—these were in themselves thousand-tongued witnesses to the power and greatness of the voluntary principle, all declaring that truth alone is vastly more efficient for good than truth and power combined. There was great significance in the fact that, up to 1891, the annual meetings of the Liberation Society were held in the Tabernacle.

Mr. Spurgeon had a majestic common sense which judged of every institution, not by the appeal it made to the taste, but by its practical value to mankind. It is delightful, as you ride along through the rural districts of England to see, now and then, rising above the trees, the stone spire of a parish church, and about it the little churchyard with the gleaming gravestones. All these form a beautiful feature in the landscape. We know that, on Sunday, the music is unexceptionable, that all is conducted with faultless taste,

that the light streaming through the stained window falls upon the dignified figure of the squire, and upon the classic, clear cut features of the clergyman, whose scarlet hood tells that he studied at one of the great seats of learning. But when you think that, of the rural congregation, few have the least idea what it is all about, that perhaps the service is all intoned so as to be in an unknown tongue; when you look over the fields and realize that the one-tenth which the poor farmers are forced to pay on their crops makes all the difference between their making a living and not making it,—then, perhaps, you say that there are two sides to the question, or rather that there is but one side.

Mr. Spurgeon realized that a Church Establishment affords no guarantee for soundness in doctrine and primitive simplicity of worship. In October, 1886, as Mr. Spurgeon was driving with a visitor whom he had kindly invited for the day, they both went into the Beckenham Parish Church, of which formerly Dr. Marsh was Rector, whose daughter wrote, "The Life of Captain Hedley Vicars," "Light on the Line," and many other charming religious books, and also did a vast deal of good work for the "navvies" on the railway lines. Under Dr. Marsh, the preaching was strongly evangelical and Low Church. But later, a new clergyman came, who has made the church and the service and the preaching Ritualistic in the extreme. There are two altars, which is contrary to the law, but is somehow winked at. There is no end of candles, small and large. There are a crucifix, and an "Agnus Dei," and banners to be carried about the church in processionals. We see what is liable to happen when the minister is appointed over the heads of the people by somebody else. The wishes of the people have no weight; they have to sit under a service that is

repugnant to them, but which gradually charms and transforms their children, till Ritualism is supreme.

The main pillar of this church is the man who refused to sell Mr. Spurgeon land for a chapel, because the Dissenters are "heretics and schismatics," but who sees the law of England broken every Sunday in his parish church by Ritualistic observances.

Mr. Spurgeon saw also that the tendency of an Established Church was to induce among its clergy a disposition to tamper with their consciences. He was not contented to bear a silent testimony. We have before said that, on June 5, 1864, when his powers had nearly reached their table land, he preached his notable sermon upon "Baptismal Regeneration," which was a trumpet call to all true men in The Establishment, who loved conscience more than place and preferment. We quote a paragraph as illustrating the position of Mr. Spurgeon and the spirit of the discourse: [1]

"Here is a church which teaches every Lord's Day in the Sunday-school, and should, according to the Rubric, teach openly in the church, all children that they were made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, when they were baptized! Here is a professedly Protestant Church, which, every time its minister goes to the font, declares that every person there receiving baptism is there and then 'regenerated and grafted into the body of Christ's Church.'"

The sermon called out sharp replies from several evangelical laymen and clergymen in the Church of England. The Earl of Shaftesbury, at the Church Pastoral Aid Society, said:

[1] As many of our readers may desire to see the whole of this remarkable discourse, we present it in an Appendix.

"I think that if what we have heard of had been addressed to me in my capacity of a layman, I should have taken no notice of it whatever; or, I should merely have said to the accuser, 'Sir, I believe you are very ignorant; to say the truth, you are a very saucy fellow; and if you think you represent the great and good Nonconformists of former days—the Howes, the Bunyans, the Flavels, and Wattses—or even that you have anything akin to the good, sound, and true religious Nonconformists of the present day, you are just as much mistaken as you would be if you thought you were well versed in history, or had even been initiated in the first elements of good breeding or Christian charity.'"

And yet it might be doubted whether Mr. Spurgeon had spoken with any greater plainness than did Lord Shaftesbury himself, two years later, when he wrote, July 23, 1866:

"On Sunday to St. Alban's Church in Holborn. In outward form and ritual, it is the worship of Jupiter and Juno. . . . Abundance of servitors, etc., in Roman apparel . . . then ensued such a scene of theatrical gymnastics, of singing, of screaming, of genuflections, such a series of strange movements of the priests, their backs almost always to the people, as I never saw before, even in a Romish temple. An hour and three quarters were given up to the histrionic part. The communicants went up to the tune of soft music as though it had been a melodrama, and one was astonished at the close that there was no fall of the curtain. . . . Is our blessed Lord obeyed in such observances and ceremonials? Do we thus lead souls to Christ or to Baal?"

Another champion, the Dean of Ripon, said:

"As to that young minister who is now raving against the Evangelical clergy on this point, it is to be regretted that so

much notice has been taken of his railings. He is to be pitied, because his entire want of acquaintance with theological literature leaves him utterly unfit for the determination of such a question, which is a question, not of mere doctrine, but of what may be called historical theology."

It is a pity the Dean did not state just how much "acquaintance with theological literature" is needful to enable a person to decide whether it is right or wrong "for clergymen to swear that they give their solemn assent and consent to what they do not believe," whether "in ecclesiastical matters, falsehood may express truth, and truth is mere unimportant nonentity."

In the same spirit, Mr. Spurgeon dealt with the form of absolution as pronounced in the Anglican churches:

"Here is the absolution, and I humbly and heartily desire a 'Thus saith the Lord' for it. 'Our Lord Jesus Christ who hath left power to his church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences; and *by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*'"

Elsewhere in the discussion, Mr. Spurgeon spoke of "The Order for the Burial of the Dead":

"What a disgraceful farce is that which is transacted at the open grave, when a 'dear brother,' who has died drunk, is buried in a 'sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life,' and with the prayer that 'when we shall depart this life, we may rest in him (Christ), as our hope is that this our brother doth.' Here is a 'regenerate' brother who having defiled the village by constant uncleanness and bestial drunkenness, died without a sign of repentance, and yet the professed minister of God solemnly accords him funeral

rites which are denied to unbaptized innocents, and puts the reprobate into the earth 'in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.'"

Do the words of Mr. Spurgeon seem severe? Let us excuse him; perhaps he has been reading the speech of Lord Ebury[1] in the House of Lords, June 1, 1863, and he had in mind the reference which his lordship made to an actual case. In December, 1848, a notorious evil-liver was turned out of a tavern in Cambridge, at a late hour of night so intoxicated that, falling into a ditch, he was suffocated. Mr. Dodd, the parish clergyman, while "acting throughout with great wisdom and propriety," declined to read over him the service which declared the deceased "our dear brother" who was "resting in Christ." He was cited before the Court of Arches, was fined the cost of the suit, and suspended for six months.

No doubt also he learned from the same speech (if he was not aware of it before) that seventeen "distinguished residents of the University of Cambridge" circulated a memorial to the "Right Reverend Bench of Bishops," which was later signed by three thousand eight hundred and fourteen clergymen, setting forth that "the almost indiscriminate use of 'The Order for the Burial of the Dead,' as practically enforced by the existing state of the law, imposes a heavy

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[1] This most estimable nobleman, now in his ninety-first year, the oldest member of the House of Peers, has been throughout his long life the friend of missions and of evangelical religion. Both in his place as a member, first, of the House of Commons, and later, since 1857, as a member of the House of Lords, and as President of the Prayer Book Revision Society, he has labored untiringly to free the Anglican Ritual of all that is out of harmony with spiritual and scriptural Christianity. The volume just issued, "Lord Ebury as a Church Reformer" (by Hon. and Rev. E. W. Bligh. London, James Nisbet & Co.), is worthy the careful attention of every student of the present religious situation in England.

burden upon the consciences of clergymen, and is the occasion of a grievous scandal to many Christian people."

Of course, he had not read the speech of Lord Ebury, made July 23, 1865, in which his lordship moved that "in the opinion of this House, the evils arising from the compulsory and almost indiscriminate use of the Burial Service of the Church of England demand the early attention of the legislature;" but he may have heard of a case cited by Lord Ebury as having occurred in Colyton, Devonshire. Mr. Gueritz, the Incumbent, as directed by law, read thirteen times a year the Athanasian Creed, which consigned to eternal perdition, among others, the Unitarians, "against whom he believed this creed to have been specially directed." After he had read this creed on Sunday, the sexton informed him of the death of one of his parishioners, a Unitarian. Having said that this man would "perish everlastingly," he was now required to say of the same man, before the same congregation, that he "committed the body of his dear brother" to the ground, "in the sure and certain hope of his resurrection to eternal life and happiness in the world to come." Rather than violate the dictates of conscience, he refused to read the Order of Burial; he also was cited, admonished, and condemned to pay the cost of the suit. His lordship added, "All comment upon such a state of things is simply superfluous."

Undoubtedly, Mr. Spurgeon had read in another speech of Lord Ebury in the House of Lords, the following:

"What is it we complain of? We see a Church, whose confessors and martyrs suffered and bled to establish it in the utmost purity of doctrine and simplicity of ritual, gradually approaching in its doctrine and ritual to the Church of Rome. We have transubstantiation, in all but

the name, auricular confession, penance, priestly absolution, prayers for the dead, ornamental vestments, emblematic banners and processions, crucifixes, incense, candles lighted in broad daylight."

Feeling for the sad estate of his evangelical brethren of the Church of England, Mr. Spurgeon no doubt desired to aid them to emancipate themselves. He was unwilling that he and his brethren of the Nonconformist churches should have a monopoly of self-sacrifice and fidelity to conviction.

While there was no change in Mr. Spurgeon's views, yet, in later years, his personal relation to many of the members of the Anglican Church was very friendly.

It is probable that the clergy of all shades learned to appreciate his true manliness and his spiritual force and the greatness of the work he was doing for England. And possibly, some among them may have realized, with the passage of time, that his strong utterances were not unneeded. And he, on the other hand, as Dr. Weston has justly observed in a previous chapter, came to prize in the Ritualists their vivid realization of the supernatural, while as to the Low Church wing, he perhaps felt glad that they were inconsistently right rather than consistently wrong.

But is not the present decadence of the evangelical wing of the Establishment the natural result of the long-continued profession and assertion by its clergy of doctrines from which their hearts and conscience revolt?

It is not needful to remind the reader that Mr. Spurgeon was a member of the great Baptist brotherhood, holding to its essential doctrines, to the baptism of believers, to the ordinances as Christ the Lord delivered them, to a spiritual and regenerate church, to the Bible, and especially the New Testament, as the only rule of faith and practice, to absolute

severance of Church from State, and to the lordship of Christ alone in his own church.

Upon the subject of the Lord's Supper, the practice of Mr. Spurgeon and his church was far removed from what is ordinarily known as "open communion." A visitor who was certified as a member of an evangelical church received a ticket to the Lord's Table for three months, after which he was told, "You have now had an opportunity of observing our practice. We shall be glad to have you be baptized and unite with us; otherwise, you had better go where you find fuller sympathy." Mr. Spurgeon said, in substance, to Dr. Wayland Hoyt and to other gentlemen, what he wrote to the "Baptist Weekly," March 26, 1884, "As compared with the bulk of English Baptists, I am a strict communionist, as my church fellowship is strictly of the baptized."

As to the relation of Mr. Spurgeon to the Baptist Denomination in England, we are favored with the following communication from Rev. Charles Williams, the highly esteemed pastor of Accrington, in Lancashire, President of the Baptist Union, 1886–87, author of "Principles and Practices of the Baptists."

"Mr. Spurgeon was much more than a Baptist. He belonged to Christendom, like Carey, Livingstone, Brainerd and Judson, Wesley and Maclaren. These men, by common consent, are not the exclusive possession of any one denomination, but, with Paul and Apollos and Cephas, are given to all who are Christ's. Nevertheless, each of them has had his name on a church roll, has been numbered with a particular denomination. Though so much more than a Baptist, Mr. Spurgeon was a very decided, thorough and outspoken Baptist.

"Is there a Baptist denomination? The Baptists of Great Britain are not an organic whole. They differ from Wesleyan Methodists and Presbyterians in almost every particular as to government. The Baptist Union has no legislative or controling power. While the Conference can direct and restrain Wesleyans in their church life and activities, and the General Assembly is a court of last appeal to Presbyterians, the Baptist Union has no authority within a church or over its pastor. Each church is self-governing and independent of all human power outside itself. Every church makes out its own trust deeds, and prescribes all the conditions upon which property shall be held for its use, and no County Association or National Union has voice or vote in the matter. In the election of a pastor, no confirmation of the choice by neighboring ministers is necessary. The church appoints; and the appointment is regarded as equivalent to ordination, for it is all the ecclesiastical authority a minister gets to preach the gospel, to administer ordinances, to shepherd believers. Neighboring pastors may be asked to attend a recognition service, but no official sanction is requisite to give validity to the action of the individual church.

"Our Baptist Missionary Society is not governed by the denomination, but by its members (those who subscribe half a guinea annually, and ministers who make an annual collection). These appoint the committees, and would resent any interference with their supremacy. The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland is only a Society of certain Baptists, which has no constitutional right, any more than any other society of Baptists, to be considered the denomination or to speak in its name. It is this peculiarity of British Baptists which makes me ask, Is there a Baptist denomination?

"For many years our friend was as denominational as I am. It fell to my lot to be the first Secretary of the Fund for Augmenting the Incomes of the Pastors of our Poorer Churches, and of the Fund for Providing Annuities for Aged and Infirm Ministers and the Widows of Pastors. In both capacities I came into frequent and very friendly relations with Mr. Spurgeon. He was among the earliest and most liberal of my backers. From the first he subscribed to the Augmentation Fund, and often told me to ask for any additional help needed. In 1875, he was anxious to keep the Augmentation Fund a separate society, and to prevent its absorption by the Baptist Union. My colleague in those days was Rev. H. C. Leonard. In urging me to maintain the independence of our fund, Mr. Spurgeon wrote characteristically: 'When I look at you and Leonard, I say, "There go the ships," but when I look at the Baptist Union I say, "There is that leviathan whom thou hast made to play therein."' But he helped me to the last, with very large generosity. And so with the Annuity Fund. He gave five hundred pounds towards our Reserve Fund (fifty thousand pounds), and held a meeting of his friends on his lawn in Nightingale Lane in its behalf.

"Some years later, I explored Cumberland for the Baptists, and discovered at Carlisle a half-starved Baptist minister who hailed from Spurgeon's Pastors' College. I wrote to our friend. He pleaded that the Lancashire Association should take up Carlisle. We gave fifty pounds a year and he another fifty pounds to Carlisle for some years. In return I urged him to help us in Workington, where, in the face of many difficulties, the Baptists were struggling into existence. He responded, and for some time gave fifty pounds a year for Workington, which is also in Cumberland.

"To the last, Mr. Spurgeon continued to subscribe and to preach for our Missionary Society. His College is denominational. Our colleges are, in this, following the lead of all other British Baptist institutions, separate and independent societies, and no more under the control of the Baptist Union, or any assembly, than your Rochester Seminary. Mr. Spurgeon trained ministers for the pastorate of Baptist churches. Certainly, until 1883, Mr. Spurgeon was as much one of the Baptist denomination as I.

"Baptists are free, without prejudice to their right to membership in what is termed the denomination, to decline or resign membership in the Baptist Union. Mr. Spurgeon, until 1883, was a constant friend of the Baptist Union. He was never a leader. I do not recollect seeing him at any meeting of the committee or council. But he attended its half-yearly sessions, especially in the autumn in the provinces. At Liverpool, in 1882, he was his own dear and glorious self, both in preaching and in talk. At Leicester, in 1883, a Unitarian was, with many Baptists, a guest of the Mayor at a public reception. This gave offense to Mr. Spurgeon. A discussion on 'The Changes now Passing Over Religious Thought' brought out clearly divergence on the part of some from what Mr. Spurgeon regarded as essentials of the Evangelical Faith. The result was that he never again attended a meeting of the Baptist Union. In 1886, when I was President, I hoped to secure a reunion of divided Baptists; and hence my plea for Union at the spring meeting, to which Mr. Spurgeon responded favorably. In the autumn Mr. Spurgeon wrote me:

"'I greatly rejoice at everything about the meetings. I do not see how they could have been better. . . . I congratulate you on your year of office. . . . Nothing has given

me so much delight as the Bristol Session. In it I see every reason why I should have been there; my absence had respect to former griefs for which I could not forbear by my absence to indicate that I had no fellowship in them.'

"April 15, 1887, he wrote me, asking me to attend his Annual Conference:

"'You are, I suppose, the President of the Baptist Union until the following Monday. I invite you in that capacity: but I should have done so as Charles Williams without the office.'

"And then Mr. Spurgeon declares that he 'ministers to the good of all by being obliterated as to public speech,' 'but by doing,' he adds, 'whatever I can in actual union with every good work which the Union undertakes.' His precise attitude then to the Union is indicated in what follows: 'I should be glad for you to speak [to his students] of the Union and its work, at the Conference, without any reference to me. I am glad that all the brethren should follow their denominational leaders as far as ever they can. *They* do not occupy the specially trying ground which I occupy, and, as they have not my scruples, I shall not attempt to inoculate them.'

"This was in April, 1887. At the end of April our 'angelical doctor,' the sweetly reasonable and John-like Dr. Culross, became my successor in the Presidency of the Union. During his year of office, without any act of offense or provocation from the Union, subsequent to April, 1886, the Down Grade Controversy raged, which ultimately led to Mr. Spurgeon's final and formal separation from the Baptist Union. I do not know what led to the change of attitude on Mr. Spurgeon's part from April, 1887, to October, 1887. He did not in any way take me into his confi-

dence during these eventful six months. The secret history of the Controversy will be known some day. I am sure of this, that, when it is, Mr. Spurgeon will not be dishonored. As to his motives and aims, no one doubts. He did his utmost to be both charitable and conscientious, and acted, doubtless, on information supplied to him.

> Whatever record leap to light
> He never shall be shamed."

As to the "Down Grade Controversy" and the withdrawal of Mr. Spurgeon from the Baptist Union, it becomes an American, separated by three thousand miles of ocean from England, to speak with a modest sense of fallibility, and with a recognition of the difficulty of putting himself in the place of all the good and great men whose names imparted dignity to the discussion. The impression grew upon Mr. Spurgeon that, among the members of the Union, were those who held and expressed erroneous and misleading views upon vital doctrines of the gospel. These fears, mingled, however, with hopefulness, may be read between the lines in a letter dated February 25, 1886, after his return from Mentone:

Thank God, there was no falling off of funds, as I feared. He was doubly gracious to me. I trust that we may all in the future receive more from God and do more for God, and bring more glory to God. With the exception of our perfect brethren, we have all plenty of room for growing better, and I reckon it a glaring imperfection in them that they are without that space for grace to work in. Let us, to use your own idiom, "go ahead," and may we especially be enabled to make headway against the growing scepticisms of our age. "Steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," may we all be till the end come.

It was with pain and reluctance that he contemplated the

possibility of being separated from his brethren. September 27, 1886, after a full and confidential conversation with a visitor, he wrote:

Please write and say nothing about me and the Baptist Union till I see you and explain at full. I am anxious to have nothing said which can trouble our friends and cause discord. A few heedless persons would be glad to see strife, but I can differ and not quarrel.

Strenuous effort was made to remove his unfavorable impressions, but without success. In the August number of "The Sword and Trowel," 1887, he published the celebrated article "The Down Grade," the spirit of which is indicated in the following:

The Atonement is scouted, the Inspiration of Scripture is derided, the Holy Ghost is degraded into an influence, the Punishment of Sin is turned into fiction, and the Resurrection into a myth. And yet these enemies of our faith expect us to call them brethren and maintain a confederacy with them.

This article was followed in September, by "Our Reply to Sundry Critics and Inquirers," and, in October, by "The Case Proved," and, in November, by "A Fragment upon the Down Grade Controversy."

Meanwhile, in 1887, Mr. Spurgeon had formally withdrawn from the Union. Upon the announcement of this withdrawal, a committee of the Union was appointed, consisting of John Aldis, D. D., President Joseph Angus, D. D., and Alexander Maclaren, D. D., who say:

We have learned with extreme regret that our dear friend and fellow laborer, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, has withdrawn from membership in the Baptist Union. We heartily agree with Mr. Spurgeon in regarding disloyalty to Christ and his gospel as inconsistent with membership in the Baptist Union. . . . While we differ from Mr. Spurgeon in the step he has

taken, we are at one with him in loyalty to Christ, in love for the gospel, and in earnest longing of heart that it may be preached in simplicity, uncorruptness, fullness, and power, in all the pulpits of the land, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. And we rejoice that, though he has withdrawn from the Union, we shall continue to enjoy fellowship and engage in service with him as members of the same denomination.

The period of this controversy was a time of intense distress to Mr. Spurgeon. May 22, 1888, he wrote:

The Lord knoweth the way that I take, and to his divine arbitration, I leave the matter. . . . I have borne my protest and suffered the loss of friendships and reputation, and the infliction of pecuniary withdrawments and bitter reproach; I can do no more. My way is henceforth far removed from their way. But the pain it has cost me none can measure. I can never compromise the truth of God. . . . It is not a matter of personalities, but of principles. And where two sets of men are diametrically opposite in their opinions upon vital points, no form of words can make them one.

June 18, 1888, he writes:

I am so glad to forget all this when writing to you. I send hearty thanks to Mrs. A. (an American lady who had just sent him twenty pounds for his various enterprises). I am cheered when I needed cheering. See how I have been in storms:

1. These Union troubles.
2. Then wife very ill these seven weeks, and ill still.
3. Next, my dear mother died.
4. On the day of the funeral I was smitten by my old enemy very fiercely, and have undergone a baptism of pain. Cannot walk yet, and barely stand. Still I rejoice in God. Lots of Americans here; choice specimens. Hearty love.

"The Sword and Trowel" for August, 1891, contained "The Down Grade and Up Grade; or, the Power of Truth," in which Mr. Spurgeon showed by example cited from recent religious history what vitality and what power of con-

quest there is in the truth when proclaimed. In all his addresses to the Pastors' College Conference, up to the very last, upon "The Greatest Fight in the World," he urged his students, with the most impassioned eloquence, to contend earnestly for the faith. Apprehending that the members of the old Pastors' College Conference were not entirely exempt from the dreaded errors, he dissolved that body, and formed a new Conference upon a basis intensely and unmistakably evangelical.

There is not the least reason to suppose that Mr. Spurgeon ever in the least changed his views, or regretted the position he had taken.

There can be no doubt of the thorough sincerity, the absolute conviction, and the complete unselfishness of Mr. Spurgeon. He sacrificed his own feelings, his friendships, to his sense of duty, as he had done in 1886, when he separated himself from Mr. Gladstone, an honored personal friend, because he believed that "Home Rule" was fraught with calamity to the Empire and to Protestantism. No doubt he was aware also that he imperilled, humanly speaking, the income of the enterprises under his charge. He had every reason for keeping silence, if conscience would permit silence.

It has been intimated that Mr. Spurgeon's action was the result of his impaired health and his consequent depression of spirits, and of his tendency to a morbid pessimism. In this opinion, the author cannot at all agree. In the fall of 1886, Mr. Spurgeon was cheerful, bright, often witty, kindly in his judgments of men, however earnestly he might protest against errors in doctrine. It was the "Down Grade" which affected his health, rather than his health which precipitated the "Down Grade."

At the same time we must recognize the fact that men of a strong character, of leadership, of marked ability and intense conviction, are prone to have small tolerance for those who differ from them, and also that it is the misfortune of great and eminent men, as they advance in life, more and more to be surrounded by those who look upon them with a modified idolatry, and who no longer question or discuss, but only echo and reflect.

Of the unscriptural and dangerous character of the errors against which Mr. Spurgeon protested, there can be no doubt. How far they had pervaded the Union, whether the Union could be better reformed from within or from without, these were questions on which good and wise men might differ in judgment. And it is surely possible to recognize in the fullest degree the love of truth and the self-sacrificing heroism which actuated Mr. Spurgeon, without casting the shadow of a reproach upon Dr. Angus, Dr. Maclaren, and Dr. Landels.

Mr. Spurgeon never left the denomination. The Baptist Union is not the denomination, but a voluntary society, like our own Missionary Union. Mr. Spurgeon and the Tabernacle Church left the London Baptist Association, but at once joined the Surrey and Middlesex Baptist Association.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. SPURGEON AT HOME.

NEVER would Mr. Spurgeon have gone through his unparalleled labors, if he had not found rest and reinforcement in his home, and in the society of a brave, noble, loving woman.

Early in his ministry, one of the deacons, seeing that Mr. Spurgeon was giving away all and laying up nothing, persuaded him to buy a house with pleasant grounds in Nightingale Lane, Clapham, which, at that time, was a quiet and not crowded suburb. Here Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon passed twenty-three happy years. But the city grew up over what had been an open space. It became absolutely necessary for his health that he should have the quiet and the pure air of the country. The same causes which had made Nightingale Lane less desirable for a residence had increased the commercial value of the property. This increase, with the wise economy of his wife, enabled Mr. Spurgeon to purchase the estate at Westwood, just a mile from the Sydenham Station, to which he gave the name of Beulah. It was then, in 1880, much less valuable than now.

In August, 1880, Mrs. Spurgeon wrote, of the removal from the old home, "Every nook and corner, both in house and garden, abounds with sweet or sorrowful memories. . . . Though both husband and wife have been caused to suffer severe pain and months of weakness, our house has been far oftener to us a Bethel than a Bochim." On the walls of

the study in the old home, by the request of the incoming tenants, was placed the following, written by Mr. Spurgeon:

"Farewell, fair room, I leave thee to a friend:
Peace dwell with him and all his kin.
May angels evermore the house defend.
Their Lord hath often been within."

"On our first view of the new home," Mrs. Spurgeon writes, "we were reminded of Bunyan's description of the

ENTRANCE TO WESTWOOD.

Delectable Mountains, 'A pleasant prospect on every side. These mountains are Immanuel's land; they are within sight of his city; the sheep also are his, and he laid down his life for them.'"

Beulah Hill is about seven miles south from London. One may see the dome of St. Paul's, and, on rare occasions, the towers of Windsor. The air is pure and sweet, and now and then the sun (if that name may be applied to the

aerial phenomenon sometimes witnessed in England) lies warm and soft upon the grassy slope. A friend gave to Mr. Spurgeon a waterproof mattress on which he would sometimes lie upon the sward and would try to fancy that it was Southern France. The complete repose, the pure atmosphere, added greatly, not only to Mr. Spurgeon's comfort and happiness, but to his power of labor and to the duration of his life.

"The Pall Mall Gazette," June 19, 1884, says:

"The borders of the kitchen garden are all aglow with pinks and other homely English flowers, the beds of which yield every week a heavy crop for the slums of Southwark. The flower mission in connection with the Tabernacle—there is almost everything in connection with the Tabernacle except a theatre and a public house—sends its gleaners regularly to Westwood, and their baskets of flowers gladden many a home in the dark and dreary alleys of London. Rustic arbors and convenient seats offer pleasant resting-places.

"Passing the lattice door, recalling the Wicket-gate, the visitor finds himself in a small entrance hall, from which the dining room opens to the right, and Mr. Spurgeon's study to the left; while between the two lie Mrs. Spurgeon's Book-Fund room, Mrs. Spurgeon's own room, and Mr. Spurgeon's library. Mrs. Spurgeon's room, whence she directs the distribution of the books provided by the Book Fund, adjoins the small room where innumerable volumes accumulate, until the fortnightly wagon arrives from the Globe Parcel Express, and carries them off from Westwood to all parts of the world.

"Mr. Spurgeon received me in his study, just as he came in from the garden, upon which the study windows open

MR. SPURGEON IN HIS STUDY.

directly. From the windows, the eye wanders over the kitchen garden, murmurous with bees, to Thornton heath, with Croydon in the distance. In his study Mr. Spurgeon keeps two private secretaries constantly going. He has two more at the Tabernacle, one or two at the College, and others elsewhere. One of them at Westwood is a shorthand writer, and, together with his colleague, he is kept busy till six. All moneys for the College, Orphanage, etc., are sent direct to Mr. Spurgeon, who is the paymaster-general.

"'It is my constant labor,' said Mr. Spurgeon, 'to thrust off some portion of my work on other shoulders, but it all comes back upon me. The more I do, the more there is to do.

"The study is a work-a-day room, the walls lined with books, and the spacious table in the centre bearing abundant traces of work and wear. Mr. Spurgeon, in a white felt wide-awake and a light alpaca garden coat, talked pleasantly. A genial, hearty man, full of shrewdness and humor, whose character has broadened and deepened as he has made his way through life; and who, having lived down the calumnies with which he was almost overwhelmed at first, now marvels most of all at the all-encompassing atmosphere of reverence and love in which he spends his life. Mr Spurgeon has mellowed much with time.

"His library is a spacious room, surrounded with books from floor to ceiling, in the best condition and in excellent order. The most interesting corner is that in which are his own works in various languages—his collection of pamphlets, his scrap-books, and last, but by no means least, his most amusing collection of all the portraits and caricatures of himself which have been published since he began his ministry. The Spurgeon pamphlets form several volumes.

At first, they are chiefly abusive, but as time advanced, this abuse died away, and eulogy, at the end, becomes almost as monotonous as vituperation.

"Among the treasures, is a relic of Dr. Livingstone. It was one of 'Spurgeon's Sermons,' which the great explorer carried through Africa till his death. It bears the inscription in Livingstone's handwriting—'Very good—D. L.'"

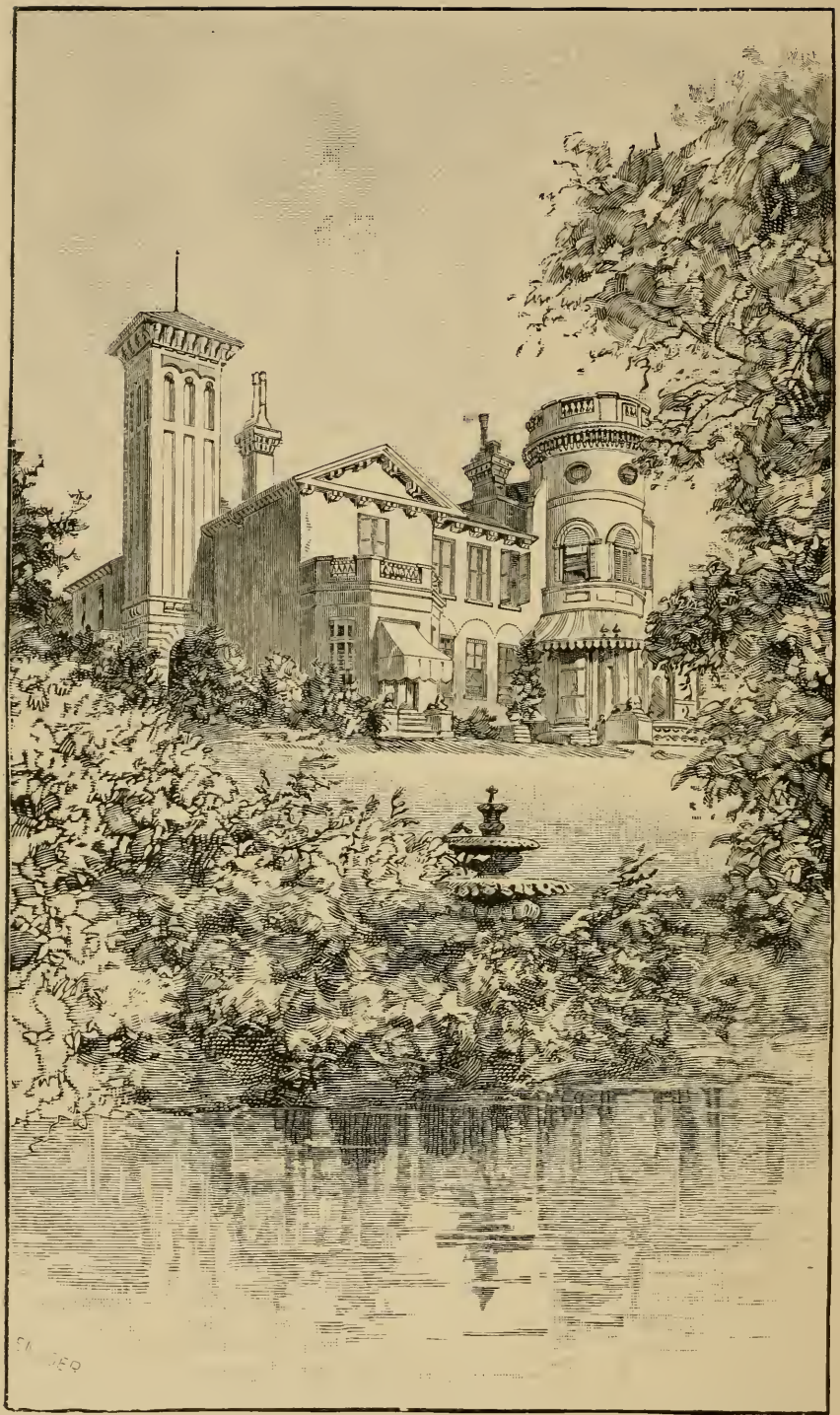
Into their home came, in the providence of God, joys and sorrows which elevate and purify. October 2, 1879, Mrs. Spurgeon writes:

"Committed to the faithful keeping of his father's God, our precious son [Thomas], sails to-day for his second visit to Australia. The cold and damp of our English winter made us fear for his somewhat delicate constitution. . . . Give the winds and the waves charge concerning him, O Lord."

In 1884, the son returned, though a few weeks too late for the Jubilee. Thursday evening, July 10th, Mrs. Spurgeon writes:

"About ten this evening, my darling son was in my arms. The pain of five years' absence was almost annihilated. Sixteen thousand miles to come home to see father and mother! Many prayers were ascending to heaven from both sides of the world that a safe and prosperous voyage might be vouchsafed to the beloved traveler."

And the son records a special instance in which these petitions were answered. At Adelaide, the good ship Iberia lay from Sunday morning till Monday noon, and Mr. Thomas Spurgeon was enabled to spend the Lord's Day with the Lord's people. On Monday, owing to misinformation, he reached the pier too late for the last steam launch for the great steamer. Soon they saw her anchor weighed,



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and she was off. Meanwhile, a friend had gone to the Semaphore and had signaled the ship:

"For every sake, stop! A son of the best parents in all the world wants to get home to them, and cannot wait an extra fortnight!"

The son had chartered a steam launch and was in pursuit of the Iberia, which all the time was growing smaller and smaller. The skipper of the launch told them that it was a mail steamer; that a little before she had refused to stop for fifteen passengers; and that she would not stop for the Governor himself. But, suddenly, "She's heading round!" Her stern gave place to her bow, and she bore down upon the launch. Soon he was on board and headed for London. The fourth officer had seen the signal, though it was not customary to look out for signals when quitting port.

"The Lord had put his hand on the steering gear of the captain's heart, and made him give the signal, 'Hard a port.'"

Just far enough from London to be out of the way of idlers, just near enough to be reached by those who loved Mr. Spurgeon or had an errand with him, Westwood or Beulah received into its gates many of the Lord's people, sometimes dignitaries, sometimes students from the college, sometimes very humble laborers in the Lord's field. One of his evangelists says:

"How he delighted to gather about him there a little band of brethren, and after the evening meal propose a few 'tales of mercy'! With what interest he would listen to each in turn, and the starting tear would soon tell how his tender, trusting heart was touched. What 'tales of mercy' he could tell! Can we ever forget them? How they come crowding the memory."

At another time, he would take his visitors to the pond and show them the swans, which followed him around as he walked on the bank; or he would show them the stable, saying, "You might eat your dinner off the floor; everything is so clean." The straw in the stalls was braided just behind the horses, so that it might almost be said the stalls were carpeted. Over the stalls were the names of the two ponies, "Brownie" and "Beauty." "My horses," he said, "are under the law; they observe Saturday. I never have them out on that day, whatever may happen." But on Sunday they carried him to the Tabernacle.

Nature rested and relaxed him; he was sportive and full of cheer; but his humor always had a meaning.

"Are you troubled in your country with these sinless people?" he said to an American visitor. "I had two of them at work for me. But at last I said to them, 'You come late in the morning; you go away early in the afternoon. And in the time between you spoil my shrubs.' So I got rid of them; and now I have two sinners at work, and everything is in good order."

We quote again from the visitor, whose letters we have already used:

"After seeing the Orphanage thoroughly, we drove over Clapham Common, covered with gorse, and through Surrey to Beulah Hill. Mr. Spurgeon showed the guests his fernery, in which he takes much delight, his garden and farm, his cows and other stock. There are ten cows. This department is under the care of Mrs. Spurgeon, who from the profit of the cows supports a colporteur in the neighborhood.

"Then we walked, or sat on a rural bench, or under the arbor, and talked. It was indescribably delightful to hear from him and Mrs. Spurgeon reminiscences of the early days.

"I had not thought of staying beyond the afternoon; but Mr. Spurgeon said: 'You are not here very often; now, stay to tea.' I was willingly persuaded; we had pears, peaches, plums, and honey, all from his own garden. After tea, the family, with the servants, were called together for family prayers. I would not have missed this for anything. He read the part of the twenty-third chapter of Luke, which tells of the young ruler who came to the Lord. As he read, he commented with his wonted freshness, and now and then quaintness. This was, throughout, a sweet, lovely service.

"Then we had further talk. He showed me a little volume, 'Norcott on Baptism,' to which he wrote an introduction; it has been translated into Turkish and Armenian and Bulgarian; and as a result Baptists are springing up in those regions.

"Mrs. Spurgeon also kindly allowed me to see her workshop, where she does all the correspondence about the Book Fund, and also the little store-room where the books are kept, and where the parcels are done up.

"As I was coming away, Mr. Spurgeon directed my attention to a few of the pictures in the hall, representing scenes in the Reformation. He has four or five hundred of them. He delights in all that illustrates and honors these heroes—Calvin, Beza, Luther, and the rest of the Lord's chosen men at arms. He sometimes lends the collection to churches as an aid in raising money.

"Everything must have an end. The 'Spurgeon Day' was at its close. I left the land of Beulah and returned to the great city, thanking God for the blessing granted to the world through these his servants, and asking for them every blessing, earthly and heavenly."

Later Mr. Spurgeon kindly expressed a desire to see me

again before he went to Mentone and I to America. So I gladly went Wednesday, November 3, to Beulah Hill. We drove first by the large common of the town of Croydon. All along there were delightful bits of wood; the brackens (or ferns) had withered; the forest leaves were fading. This suggested to Mr. Spurgeon the remark that the words of Scripture, "we all do fade as a leaf" (Isaiah 64 : 6), do not refer to the decay of *life* (as is implied by the use ordinarily made of the words), but to the decay of our supposed righteousness and morality. "We all do fade as a leaf; and our *iniquities*, like the wind, have taken us away." We think that we are righteous, but presently, under the pressure of temptation, our moral strength fades and we are swept before the current of passion.

Beyond Croydon is the Palace of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Mr. Spurgeon receives each year a card permitting him to ride through the grounds. When he last wrote asking for the renewal of the card, he enclosed a return envelope addressed simply "C. H. Spurgeon." But another envelope was returned, addressed "Rev. C. H. Spurgeon," and the card made out in the same form. This little incident is to be noted, especially in connection with the fact that "Lodge's Peerage and Baronetage," in the chapter upon "titles," says that Dissenting Ministers are not clergymen, and are not entitled to be addressed as "Rev.," but should be addressed "Mr. A. B., minister of the ——— Dissenting Chapel." I am glad that the Primate of all England rises above this foolish and offensive nonsense.

As a further illustration of the courtesy of his neighbors, when Mr. Spurgeon was very ill, one of the first to call was Dr. Thorold, then Lord Bishop of Rochester (in whose diocese Upper Norwood and Croydon are situated). He

said: "I would like to see Brother Spurgeon, if he will see me; and I would like to pray with him." As soon as Mr. Spurgeon was able to be out, the Bishop invited him to his home for a day. Other visitors were denied, and they walked in the grounds and talked and prayed together.

Presently, the weather, which had been undecided and wavering and feminine, really made up its mind; and rain began to come down, and we made the best of our way home. We were a little late to dinner, but Mrs. Spurgeon (a born angel) did not reprove John Ploughman; and he, on his part, expressed with touching humility his gratitude to the gude-wife for waiting dinner till he came.

He makes little jests about his abstinence from meat. He once said to some friends at his table: . . . "I will give you ten pounds if you will prove to me that that grouse is a vegetable, for then I can eat it."

Of course, everybody knows Mr. Spurgeon as the great preacher, as the great power for evangelical religion in England, but not everybody knows that he is the most delightful of friends and the most genial of companions.

On the following Sunday morning I attended service at the Tabernacle and remained to the Lord's Supper. Then, as I took him by the hand for good-bye, he said, in his kind, cheerful way:

"If you will come over here and start a paper we will all take it."

And that was the last to me.

Beulah was not alone the home of Mr. Spurgeon. It was the centre of that wonderful agency, born in the heart of a suffering woman—the Book Fund. In 1874, after reading the first volume of Mr. Spurgeon's "Lectures to My Students," Mrs. Spurgeon exclaimed:

"I wish I could place it in the hands of every minister in England."

Thereto "John Ploughman," with his wonted homely directness, said:

"Then, why not do it? How much will you give?"

His words set her to thinking how much she could spare from housekeeping or personal matters. As the result, she produced exactly enough to pay for a hundred copies of the book; and, in her own words, "THE BOOK FUND WAS INAUGURATED." The hundred copies were eagerly received and applications for other copies came pouring in. And there came, from generous hands, gifts in money soon amounting to one hundred and eighty-two pounds.

In August, 1876, Mrs. Spurgeon, in "A Letter to Her Friends," published in "The Sword and Trowel," told the story of the first year of the Book Fund. Three thousand and fifty-eight books had been distributed to ministers whose salaries were seventy pounds, sixty pounds, or even less than fifty pounds. The Book Fund, springing thus, without human forethought, into existence, was the product of divine wisdom and of God's thought for his servants. If money is given to a minister, there are a hundred calls for every penny, and soon all is gone; and, beyond a present lessening of hardship, all is as before. The man's earning capacity is no greater; his mind is starved without books; what can he do but starve his people, and they, in turn, starve him? But the gift of books, timely, suggestive, appropriate, furnishing him with new material, helps him to think. All this makes him a new man. The people rub their eyes and say, "What has come over the minister?" and presently they feel that his stipend must be raised. He feeds them, and they, in turn, feed him.

MRS. SPURGEON. Page 241.

A missionary from Jamaica wrote: "It is a joy to hear one of the brethren say, 'De lady ob de great Massa Spurgem gib me dis book tro' de Siety!'"

A newly ordained curate of the Church of England, who had received "Lectures to my Students," said, "How Mr. Spurgeon does show up our bad habits!"

The Lord constantly opened new doors, sent new calls, and provided the means for meeting them. A "pastor, with his sickly wife, and three mites of children," must go to Australia, as the only chance for the father's life. But how could he get there? Sixteen pounds was lacking, after every resource had been taxed. Just then, John Plowman received a personal gift of fifteen pounds from an unknown friend, and the voyage could be made.

The Earl of Shaftesbury asked, when on a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon, "How does the Baptist book-giving prosper?" Mrs. Spurgeon was able to tell him that of four hundred ministers who had received books within the past four months, just one-fourth were of her "own people."

A Vicar writes: "Last night I read nearly all of the first volume of 'Lectures to Students' with immense delight and satisfaction."

During the year 1880, seven thousand one hundred and forty-four volumes were given away, and six thousand two hundred and sixty-two sermons. February, 1881, Mrs. Spurgeon wrote: "There is quite a run of applications upon the Book Fund from clergymen of the Established Church." A curate said: "After opening your parcel, I could not help kneeling down and thanking God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift."

"A new source of pleasure in my work is the application of many High Church clergymen for gifts of Mr. Spurgeon's

works." One wrote: "I am an ordained priest of the Church of England. I am engaged at a stipend of thirty pounds per annum in two villages. On the second Sunday in Lent I was needing a text, when I suddenly remembered Mr. Spurgeon's sermon on 'The Three Thens' (Isaiah 6 : 1–8), and I gave it as a morning's discourse. The majority of the people were so pleased that, during the nine Sundays I was there, the church was full every afternoon. Might I respectfully beg the favor of a few of the earlier volumes of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons?"

A missionary from the West Indies said: 'The sermons have been a treasure to me for fifteen years. Many a one have I put through my own little mill, and then given it to the people, and when they have said, 'Oh, massa, it be one berry good sarmont,' I have thought to myself, '*Yes, it ought to be,* and I don't wonder you like it!'"

In 1881, seven thousand two hundred and ninety-eight volumes were given.

Along with the books, Mrs. Spurgeon often sent packages of stationery. A minister who had received a package wrote: "Surely, I thought, this is from one who understands a preacher's needs; for I have to write very frequently on the backs of old circulars and cut open all addressed envelopes, in order to save spending the money, of which I have so little."

Another writes: "I found your splendid gift of books awaiting me; and, though weary in body and mentally depressed, the sight of them was so refreshing that, as I turned over the treasures, one by one, though it was past midnight, I felt as if I could sing aloud for joy. I went on my knees and thanked God for his great goodness to me through you."

A minister, who had received "The Treasury of David," wrote: "I had heard of the books by the hearing of the ear, but never did I think I should possess them as a free gift. O Lord, I thank thee! Thou hast crowned me with loving kindness and tender mercies. A beggar knocks at the door and receives a slice of dry bread; this is kindness. But little Johnny gets a slice with butter on it; ah, my soul, this is loving kindness, *bread with butter.*"

In 1884, Mrs. Spurgeon wrote that over twelve thousand ministers had received grants from the Book Fund. The benefits of the fund were not limited to England; but ministers in China, Palestine, Norway, Trinidad, Hayti, Africa, in every land, were blessed.

And so the Book Fund went on, cheering, blessing, enlightening, strengthening. Thus the gracious lady, who was its inspiration and author, passing through the valley of weeping, made it a place of springs.

During its first fifteen years, the Book Fund distributed one hundred and twenty-two thousand one hundred and twenty-nine volumes, besides sermons innumerable. And all this God wrought through one who was an invalid, seldom passing a day without pain.

In "The Sword and Trowel" for April, 1892, under title of "An Interrupted Service," Mrs. Spurgeon writes as to her plan for the future of her Book Fund:

"A pleasant life-work laid aside, that the sweet, sad ministry of love to my precious husband might be constantly and tenderly fulfilled; first, by his bed of terrible sickness, in the spring and summer-time; then, with expectant joy, by his side in the bright three months at Mentone: and after that, till the close of that memorable January 31, 1892, when his Saviour could no longer spare him to us,

but 'willed' that he should be with him where he is, that he might 'behold his glory.' Such is the brief, sorrowful record of the Book Fund for the past twelve months.

"A month's seclusion in one of the fairest of earth's Paradises has somewhat soothed the surgings of sorrow in my soul, and strengthened me physically for renewed service. 'I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.' So now it seems to me that the time has come to resume my work; and I believe God will help me to fulfill my earnest desire to do his will in all things, and serve him faithfully, even unto death. As long as I have life, the Book Fund must be my life-work; and I expect to be able to increase its usefulness, and scatter its blessings more widely, if health be granted me.

"By the time this 'note' is published, I shall be ready (D. V.) to receive donations from all dear friends willing to help in this important service, and also applications for books from ministers who are unable to purchase them for themselves.

"S. SPURGEON.

"'Westwood,' Beulah Hill, Upper Norwood."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BURDEN OF LIFE.

ON February 25, 1886, Mr. Spurgeon wrote, "I am well, but this gigantic work must crush me sooner or later —sooner, if the wind continues in the east much longer." But the burden of the gigantic work was bravely borne for years to come; indeed, how could it be laid aside with the Tabernacle and the College and the Orphans and the witnessing for the truth, and all the forms of work resting upon him?

He had always been greatly recruited by three months in each year spent at Mentone, in the South of France, on the shore of the Mediterranean. Here he was secluded from interruptions; he could bathe all day in the sun; he could watch the ever changing blue Mediterranean. He could read the sacred word, could saturate his mind with its spirit, could write for "The Sword and Trowel," could revise his sermons, could gather a few friends to his rooms for daily prayer and reading of the Scripture, and for the familiar commenting in which he delighted, and could have a more formal service on Sunday. Many visitors, drawn, like himself, to Mentone in quest of health, will always bless God for the high privilege of forming one of the little company who united with him in worship, in the opening of the word of God, and in the breaking of bread.

During the earlier months of the year 1891, Mr. Spurgeon had a severe attack of the prevalent influenza, combined with

the hereditary rheumatic gout and with congestion of the kidneys, which greatly prostrated him. When somewhat recovered, toward the close of May, he made a little visit to Stambourne, one of the homes of his boyhood, where he passed a few very happy days in the society of the venerable Mr. Beddow (a descendant of one of his grandfather's predecessors), and of Rev. J. C. Houchin, the present pastor at Stambourne. The accompanying cut of Mr. Spurgeon and Mr. Houchin tells how marked was Mr. Spurgeon's exhaustion, though its face shows its wonted kindliness and something of its force of will. But after a few days, another attack compelled him to hasten to his home, where, for three months, he suffered intensely, and was at times in hourly expectation of death. During these months, the most tender and affectionate solicitude was felt all over Christendom, and daily bulletins of his health were published in the papers. Constant prayer was offered, not only by the members of the Tabernacle, but by Christians all over the world. These expressions of sympathy were not limited by race or creed or station. In many instances the members and the clergy of the Establishment offered prayer in his behalf; one of the most tender expressions of sympathy came from a leading Jewish Rabbi.

Mr. Gladstone, sorrowing under the death of his son, wrote to Mrs. Spurgeon a letter, which, with Mrs. Spurgeon's reply, and Mr. Spurgeon's postscript, by his own hand, we give below, a memorable interchange of expressions of sympathy between the two greatest Englishmen of our time:

My Dear Madam: In my own home, darkened at the present time, I have read with intense interest daily accounts of Mr. Spurgeon's illness; and I cannot help conveying to you the earnest assurance of my sympathy with you, and with him, and of my cordial admiration, not only of his

MR. SPURGEON AND MR. HOUCHIN. Page 249.

splendid powers, but still more of his devoted and unfailing character. May I humbly commend you and him, in all contingencies, to the infinite stores of the divine love and mercy, and subscribe myself, my dear Madam, faithfully yours,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

WESTWOOD, UPPER NORWOOD, 18 July, 1891.

DEAR MR. GLADSTONE: Your words of sympathy have a special significance and tenderness, coming from one who has just passed through the deep waters which seem now to threaten me. I thank you warmly for your expressions of regard for my beloved husband, and with all my heart I pray that the consolations of God may abound toward you, even as they do to me. Although we cannot yet consider the dear patient out of danger, the doctors have to-day issued a more hopeful bulletin. I feel it is an honor to be allowed to say that I shall ever be,

Your grateful friend,

S. SPURGEON.

P. S.—Yours is a word of love, such as those only write who have been into the King's country, and seen much of His face. My heart's love to you.

C. H. SPURGEON.

The loving kindness of God to his servant was very marked in one particular. Mrs. Spurgeon had for many years been almost wholly confined to the house. Her husband said to the writer of these lines:

"If she were to drive for a mile, she would not get over it in weeks."

In consequence of this, for many years she was unable to accompany her husband in his annual trips to Mentone for his much needed rest and change of climate. During all these years the evident necessity for these vacations was pointing to the end which was drawing ever nearer.

But as Mr. Spurgeon's strength so far rallied as to enable him to go to Mentone again, Mrs. Spurgeon was

strengthened by God, and able, for the first time, to accompany him on his journey. This was a great joy to both of them. In a letter written on Sunday, February 7, 1892, Mrs. Spurgeon said:

"I want to tell you how perfectly happy my beloved was during the three delightful months of his residence here." And she recalled "his joy in bringing me to the place he loved so well, and showing me eagerly all the beautiful scenery in which he so delighted."

It is not easy to conceive what a sadly anxious season it would have been for both, if this year also, when he was directed to betake himself for the winter to far away Mentone, he must leave her weak, lonely, and full of deep anxiety at Westwood. It was an unspeakable blessing that she could go with him and see him day by day "perfectly happy," and that she can always look back with gratitude to God, who graciously granted those "three delightful months, "at the close of a life abounding in toils and trials.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE YEARNINGS OF THE ABSENT PASTOR.

MR. SPURGEON in the autumn of 1891 spent some time at Eastbourne in Sussex, not far from Beachy Head. He returned to his home October 16. The report of his return stated: "The journey had no ill effect upon him, and the change seems to have done him good. Just now his health is somewhat improved." The next Lord's Day the following letter, written by himself, was read to the anxious congregations at the Tabernacle at the morning and the evening services:

"To my beloved flock at the Metropolitan Tabernacle—DEAR FRIENDS: Since you all prayed for me so importunately, I would entreat you to praise with me most heartily. My stay by the sea has wrought wonders. I feel a different man altogether, and my doctor gives me hope that when I have received a solid upbuilding I shall not be much the worse for the terrific processes through which I have passed. 'Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!' I am very, very weak, and restoration to strength must be expected to be gradual. The inevitable fall of the temperature is a great peril to me for several reasons, and hence my medical friend wishes that I were away. I hope to leave on Monday, 26th. Pray that I may safely perform the journey, and Mrs. Spurgeon also. 'A thousand miles' is a serious word for such feeble folk. 'The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me,' and when I

return to you in peace we will hold a public thanksgiving, and bless our healing God. I shall leave you in the hands of our God. As a Church of the living God, you are as 'a city set on a hill which cannot be hid.' Your love and unity and prayer and faith are known everywhere.

"Will these bear the further strain which will be put upon them by the absence and feebleness of the pastor? I believe they will; but let each one see to it that the post of service with which he or she may be individually concerned, is carried on with more than past efficiency. Souls must be saved, and Jesus glorified, whether the usual leader is present, or another, or no leader at all. The Lord hear my prayer for you, even as he has heard yours for me! I am far too feeble to make any public appearance or I would come and plead that now in the hour of your testing you may be found as pure gold which fears not the continuance of the heat. I beg your co-operation with my brother and Mr. Stott, and the officers in all the regular work and service for the Lord. Let nothing flag.

"There may be some deficiencies to be made up on my return, but let these be as light as possible. If friends took the seats there would be none. I am not going to burden myself with any care. I leave the flock with the great Shepherd of the sheep, and I feel that you will be both led and fed. The Lord grant that, whether I speak or am silent, rejoice or suffer, live or die, all may be to his glory and the progress of his gospel. I am a debtor now to all churches and to all classes of society. The sympathy shown me every day almost breaks my heart with gratitude. What am I? One thing I know I am your loving servant in Christ Jesus, and the Lord's messenger to many, many souls who never saw me, but who have read the sermons.

To you at the Tabernacle I am very near of kin. God bless you all.—Yours in our One Head."

On Monday, October 26, as he had expected, he left the home to which he was never to return, and arrived safely at Calais. On the following day the long journey was resumed in a saloon car belonging to Baron Rothschild and kindly placed by him at Mr. Spurgeon's disposal. From Paris a telegram was sent back by one who saw him, saying: "He was beaming with brightness and gratitude, and said he had gained, not lost, strength on the journey." The following day Mr. Spurgeon telegraphed: "Reached Marseilles comfortably; wife fatigued. I am better than at start. All praise God." In his first letter from the Continent to the Tabernacle he said:

"My Dear Friends: If I do not write you to-day, which is only Wednesday, I could not get a letter to you for Sunday. This might be no loss to you, but it would be a trouble to me, for somehow it has grown to be a pleasing habit to keep touch with you by a weekly letter.

"Please praise the Lord for me and with me. I feel none the worse for the long journey I have already taken; but I am strangely better. All the story of my cure has been marvelous, and this last part of it is all of a piece with the rest. 'He restoreth my soul' and 'he healeth all my diseases.' Let the name of the Lord be magnified, who has such compassion on one who feels his own unworthiness more than ever. 'I was brought low, and he helped me.'

"My doctor has reported my case to my friend, Dr. Fitzhenry, of Mentone, who is a man of equal skill and kindness—a happy blend; so that none of you may think that I am distant from medical help if any return of disease

should come. But I do not anticipate further relapses, for the temperature even here is like that of summer, and further on we look for much more warmth. This will greatly diminish liability to chills.

"But my one great restorative will be news of revival at the Tabernacle. When sinners are saved and saints are sanctified my sun will have risen with healing on its wings. If the Lord will work by Dr. Pierson and Mr. Stott and the brethren at home, and make them useful at a tenfold rate compared with me in my best days, I will unfeignedly rejoice. 'Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets!' Oh, that he would use every man and woman of you! Those whom the Lord does not use are very apt to be seized by another and turned to his evil purposes. Those who are not working bees usually turn into dead flies, and spoil the sweet ointments by the potful at a time. May no one in our church sink into such a wretched condition; far rather may we be so blest as to become blessings to all around!

"Brethren and sisters, can you rise to a great opportunity? I think you can, and will. My beloved brother from America has not been sent into your midst for a small purpose. If you knew the whole story of how he came to be where he now is, you would feel this as strongly as I do. He brings the divine proffer of a great blessing. Are we ready to receive it? Are we prepared to use a flood tide? Oh, that every member may say, 'I am!' Then ask what you will, believe that you have it, and go forth to ingather it. God never disappoints. We often lock doors against ourselves and refuse to be enriched. Let us do so no more —not one of us. Let us glorify God by accepting what he is waiting to bestow.

"Accept each one my true love in Christ Jesus. Love

one another with a pure heart fervently. My brother, whose care has made the journey less formidable, when he returns will have a cheering tale to tell of me and of my dear wife, whose presence with me makes every single enjoyment into seven. I am surrounded with unexpected mercies, and would ask you to help me to express a praise which one mouth can never adequately utter."

"MENTONE, *November 5.*

"TO THE TABERNACLE—BELOVED FRIENDS: To reach you on the Lord's Day I write on Thursday. You wish to know how I am, and I will dispatch the weary question in a few words. I am much the same as when I left home, full of confidence that in answer to prayer I shall be perfectly restored. I must wait patiently in weakness till our Heavenly Father gives me back my strength. It is no small trial to feel the desire to do many things, and yet to have to feel anew your inability in the simplest efforts. To go up a few steps, to take a short walk, to move a parcel, and all such trifles, becomes a difficulty, so that Solomon's words are true, 'The grasshopper is a burden.' I think I could preach, but when I have seen a friend for five minutes I begin to feel that I have had as much of speaking as I can well manage. Thus you see where I am, and while you thank God for his goodness in so far restoring me I again ask for your prayers that my disease may continue to decrease, and, above all, that I may have no relapse. Far better is my other subject.

"From all I hear there is a hopeful interest excited in the ministry which the Lord has provided for you. The fish are round the boat. Now may the Lord enable the fishermen to cast the net skillfully, and may there be a

great haul of great fishes. At times the greatest demand of the angler is for a *landing net.* He has a hold of the fish, but needs help in drawing him to shore. May every member of the church be such a landing net to the honored preachers whom they hear. Some of you know the sacred art by long practice, let others commence the blessed habit. Souls are being awakened all around you. Beloved, be awake yourselves! 'When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees then shalt thou bestir thyself.'

"I am writing in the early morning of a warm day of brilliant sunshine, and the very thought of your holy assembly, and your loving thoughts of me, makes all this tenfold more powerful to cheer and to restore me. If I had not such an attached people I should miss my greatest earthly joy, and succumb to the depression which physical weakness is so apt to produce. My dear brother will soon be with you to report my behavior, but I am doubly happy in having my beloved wife as my watchful companion, a joy especially given in this peculiar hour of need. The Lord himself bless every one of you, and especially those who minister in word and doctrine."

"MENTONE, *November 12.*

"BELOVED FRIENDS: I have no striking progress to report, but I *feel* I must be better, whatever the signs may say. Still, feelings are doubtful evidences; one thing is daily forced upon my mind—namely, that I am weak as water, and that building up is slower work than falling down. Meanwhile, patience must have her perfect work, and I may well be quieted into cheerful submission because I receive such happy accounts of the blessing resting upon

the labors of my dear friend, Dr. Pierson. If nothing is injured by my absence the trial of being away is not burdensome. If the Lord will bless my substitute more than he has done myself, I shall rejoice to have been put aside for awhile. Now, in this matter, much depends upon each member personally. The Lord will bless you through yourselves. The missionary spirit burns in the heart of Dr. Pierson; Mr. Stott seems to be always on fire; others among your officers are zealots for souls. May the whole man be alight with heavenly fire! Then shall we see the congregation and the surrounding neighborhood warmed with interest in the gospel, and at last melted into repentance by the heat of divine grace. I am much at ease about the testimony of my pulpit, for our friend Dr. Pierson does not flinch from defending truth and assailing false doctrine. From all I can hear, I judge that error is as rampant as ever, and is as much countenanced by the association of good men with those who hold it. If I had not borne my protest before, I should have been driven to bear it now. 'Evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse.' As for us, beloved, let us abide in that which the Holy Ghost has taught us, and may that which he has written in the Book be also written by his own hand upon all our hearts. The Lord himself bless you."

"MENTONE, *November 19.*

"I have very little to say this week, and nothing which need cause you any disquietude on my behalf, though it may prevent unwise expectations. My progress, according to the medical test, is not great; still, I think things lean in the right direction. He who has raised me up from the grave can hasten the cure if he sees fit; and if it does not

seem good in his sight, I must ask for patience and be still. I never have a doubt as to my ultimate restoration, but my confidence is based upon the Lord's hearing prayer far more than on anything else. The advice to do as little as possible is so repeated to me that for this once I yield to it, and only send a card. What spiritual meat you are having from the Lord through his servant, feed thereon and grow."

November 21st, he was compelled to write a letter to moderate and chasten the too hopeful expectation of his friends: "This morning I read in the 'Times,' 'Mr. Spurgeon is rapidly recovering.' These words exactly describe what I am *not* doing. I have seasons of utter prostration. Emphatically any advance I make is the slowest of all slow things. *I shall recover*, for this is the tenor of the prayers which our God has so far answered. But there are no traces or signs of anything rapid."

Truly, we "asked life of thee and thou gavest it him, even length of days forevermore." It was the temporal life we asked; God gave the eternal.

"MENTONE, *November 26.*

"BELOVED FRIENDS: I rejoice greatly in all the glad tidings which I have received concerning the blessing which rests upon the work among you. I hope the Lord has only begun to bless, and is about to bring forth greater things hitherto held in reserve. You are not straitened in him; let no one be guilty of limiting the Holy One of Israel by unbelief or by slackness in action. Oh, for some crowning mercy for you all! I cannot say that I am better, but then I am not worse, although I have been kept

indoors by days of rain. I am always confidently hopeful of complete recovery, and therefore I faint not in heart, even when the body is overcome with weakness. In compensation for these dumb Sabbaths, the Lord will give me years of free utterance of his word. So I trust and so you pray. The Lord himself bless you all!"

"MENTONE, *December 3.*

"BELOVED FRIENDS: My heart is glad at all tidings concerning you, for the Lord is evidently refreshing you through the ministry of our beloved Dr. Pierson. I can only write you a monotonous line or two, expressing my abiding love for the church at the Tabernacle, asking your renewed prayers, and describing my invalid experience, which is almost exactly as last week. Leaving all that, I am present with you in spirit at the great gathering around the Communion Table, which has often been to me as heaven below. Our Lord is there among us. He comes nearer to us than we can come to each other; he becomes our food, and so enters into our being's self—nearer than even one member of the body to another member. 'I in them' is our Lord's way of putting it. I pray that each one of you may enjoy this living, loving, lasting union with your risen Lord when at the table of the King."

"MENTONE, *December 10.*

"BELOVED FRIENDS: Every message from home concerning the work at the Tabernacle comforts me. Your unity of heart and prayerfulness of spirit are a joy to me. How much I wish that I could look you in the face and lead you in prayer to the throne of the heavenly grace. I am, however, glad that I am not yet standing on the plat-

form among you attempting public prayer or address, for emotion would carry me away, and I should soon be quite exhausted. I put this to practical proof by offering prayer with some six or seven friends. I was overcome, and was some time before I could recover myself. Still, the mind is ready, and the physical frame must in due time follow the road to restoration; indeed, I feel better, and have no fear but in due season I shall be as strong as aforetime. It is not in my power to hasten to strength. This must come by degrees, as the Lord may please to grant it. Pray for me that the time may be not too long. I want all those who take an interest in Tabernacle work to see that the funds are all right at the close of the year. My absence has tried the home cause very much, and I hope that every one will resolve that no deficiency shall occur in anything, for that would be a great grief to me. Be thoughtfully generous just now, and it will be most seasonable. We must never allow home funds to be straitened while we personally receive so freely of the grace of God. Mrs. Spurgeon and myself are happy to be privileged to be together in this sunny land. We are both of us full of gratitude that we are spared to each other, and both thankful to you for remembering us in your prayers. God bless you each one."

"MENTONE, *December 17.*

"Though I cannot be present to wish you the blessings of the season, I would not use the words of compliment, but I would say from my heart, 'I wish you a most happy Christmas.' Upon your family gatherings may the best of blessing rest. May all your children be the Lord's children, and thus may your union in the bonds of the flesh be made eternal by the bonds of the Spirit! Joy be with you; yet

let it be joy in the Lord. I think I can fairly say I am better. Whether or no the disease is disappearing, I cannot say, though I fear there is not much difference, but in general health I must be improved, or else my feelings are sheer delusion. At any rate, I am very hopeful and praiseful, and I wish I could stand up and give out Psalm 103."

"MENTONE, *December 24.*

"MY DEAR FRIENDS: For the last time in the year 1891 I write you, and with this brief note I send hearty gratitude for your loving kindness to me during the year which is ending, and fervent wishes for a special blessing on the year so soon to begin. I have nearly finished thirty-eight years of my ministry among you, and have completed thirty-seven volumes of published sermons preached in your midst. Yet we are not wearied of each other. I shall hail the day when I may again speak with you. Surrounded by ten thousand mercies, my time of weakness is rendered restful and happy; but still to be able in health and vigor to pursue the blissful path of useful service would be my heaven below. To be denied activities which have become part of my nature seems so strange; but as I cannot alter it, and as I am sure that infinite wisdom rules it, I bow before the divine will—my Father's will.

"Again the doctor reports favorably—that is to say, yesterday he said that there was decided improvement as to the disease; nothing great, but as much as he could hope for; nothing speedy could be looked for, but matters were going most encouragingly. I was to be very careful about a chill, etc. This is an old and dull story to you. Only your prayerful and persevering interest in me could make me bold enough to repeat it. Honestly, I do not think you

are losers by my absence, so long as the Lord enables our dear friend, Dr. Pierson, to preach as he does. There is a cloud of blessing resting on you now. Turn the cloud into a shower by the heavenly electricity of believing prayer. May the Watch Night be a night to be remembered, and on the first hour of the year may the Lord say, 'From this day will I bless you.'"

Mr. Spurgeon, writing in his magazine for January, after giving the doctor's verdict that there is a *decided* improvement, says: "I am so grateful to be alive, and to have the assured prospect of recovery, that I know not how to express my thankfulness to God for answering the prayers of his people; and I may well submit to his sacred will. I cannot boast of being able to wait patiently; but I will be quiet as long as must be. Hitherto, a very little extra thinking, writing, or conversation, has shown me that I am a poor creature at my best. My peace of mind and cheerfulness of spirit make me feel as good as well; but as to strength, I cannot deceive myself with the notion that I can render any public service; for even prayer with half a dozen overpowers me. Still, my own voice is coming back in force, and the *far-away* tone which my sickness brought me is not often heard. The weather here is so specially superb, week after week, that I am much in the open air, and in the glorious sun, and this is God's own strengthening medicine for weakness such as mine. My wife's presence is also a main ingredient in my cup, which runs over with mercies."

MENTONE, *December 31.*

"I believe I am right in reporting a greater change in

the disease than could be spoken of before. It is still a great drain upon me; but as it has improved so far, I believe it will make more rapid diminution. What a joy it will be to be within measurable distance of the time to return to my pulpit and you. I have not reached that point yet. *Now, may the Lord cause the cloud of blessing to burst upon you in a great tropical shower.* I am expecting this. Grateful beyond expression for all that the Lord has done and is doing, I am eager for more. Indulgence in covetousness is sinful, but not when we 'covet earnestly *the best gifts.*' All that I can do is to pray and expect. The Lord himself deal out to each one of his children a full portion, and to those who linger at the gate may the Good Spirit give his gracious drawings that they may cross the sacred threshold *this day.* Peace be within the gates of our dear sanctuary, and prosperity within the doors. For my brethren and companions' sake will I now say, 'Peace be within thee.'"

January 15, 1892.

"My Dear Friends: There is nothing for me to say in reporting myself to headquarters beyond this—that I hope and believe that the steady and solid progress which has begun is continued and will continue. If a doctor were to visit me now for the first time, and were to investigate my disease, he would pronounce it a bad case; but those who know what I have been, and how much worse than at present everything was, must wonder at me, and think it is a remarkably good case. God be thanked for all that he has done in answer to his people's prayers. Never let us have a doubt as to the fidelity and ability of God, of the promises, and of the mercy-seat.

"On looking back upon the Valley of the Shadow of

Death through which I passed so short a time ago, I feel my mind grasping with firmer grip than ever that everlasting gospel which for so many years I have preached to you. We have not been deceived. Jesus does give rest to those who come to him; he does save those who trust him; he does photograph his image on those who learn of him. I hate the Christianized infidelity of the modern school more than ever, as I see how it rends away from sinful man his last and only hope. *Cling to the gospel of forgiveness through the substitutionary sacrifice;* and spread it with all your might, each one of you, for it is the only cure for bleeding hearts.

"Peace be unto you as a whole, and peace be to each one! I greet with whole-hearted gratitude my brother, Dr. Pierson, and with unfeigned love each deacon, elder, and member, and worker. My own dear brother in the flesh is also ever watching over the concerns of our great work. May the Lord himself keep watch over all. To Mr. Stott I wish a long and prosperous ministry where the Lord shall direct him."

"MENTONE, *January 14, 1892.*

"MY DEAR FRIENDS: I have not seen the doctor since writing last time, and I have, therefore, little to say about my health so far as medical testimony goes. We have had a week of broken, uncertain weather—days of rain, intervals of wind and hours of cold. This has kept me very much within doors, for I dare not run the risk of a chill; and therefore I fear I have made no progress, and can hardly hope that I am quite so well as to my internal mischief. In other respects I feel fairly up to the mark, and deeply grateful to be free from pain, and free from fear as to the ultimate result. I earnestly hope that your weather will

improve. When it is bad here, what must it be with you? The snow on the mountains reminds us of what others are enduring. I wish I could be in such health as to be always with you, but as this cannot be I am most thankful for the retreat afforded by this sheltered spot; and even more so for the rest of heart which comes to me through knowing that you are all spiritually fed under the ministry of Dr. Pierson. May his health be maintained and that of his wife during your trying winter. You may feel sure that I am doing pretty well, or the doctor would be looking me up. When he next calls I will have a bulletin from him; and till then you may rest in peace about me. May the saturating showers of blessings for which I am looking soon fall in tropical abundance, and may no part of the field be left dry. If there are any very sad, down-cast, and self-condemned ones among you, I desire my special love *to them*. The Lord himself looks from heaven to spy out such special characters. See Job 33 : 27, 28. I think this text is a message for somebody. May grace abound towards you."

CHAPTER XVIII.

LAST MESSAGES OF LOVE—THE END—EARTH TO EARTH.

WITH his wonted thoughtfulness, Mr. Spurgeon seemed to remember every one of those over whom he watched and for whose welfare he labored and prayed when at home. The orphans had always held a special place in his heart. In former days, before he was compelled to winter at Mentone, he would spend much of Christmas Day at the Orphanage and dine there. It was his desire that his young friends there might enjoy to the full all such festal occasions. On December 21, of 1891, he sent a letter from Mentone to the boys and girls which was read to them at the dinner table.

"MENTONE, *December 21, 1891.*

"DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS: I send you all my love, as far as the post can carry love at twopence half-penny for half an ounce. I wish you a real glorious Christmas: I might have said, 'a jolly Christmas,' if we had all been boys, but as some of us are girls I will be proper, and say, a 'merry Christmas.' Enjoy yourselves, and feel grateful to the kind friends who send money to keep the Stockwell Orphanage supplied. Bless their loving hearts; they never let you want for anything. May they have pleasure in seeing you all grow up to be all good men and women. Feel very grateful also to the trustees. These gentlemen are always at work arranging for your good. Give them three times three. Then there are Mr. Charlesworth, Mr. Ladds,

and all the masters and the matrons. Each one deserves your love and gratitude and obedience. They try to do you good; try to cheer them all you can. I should like you to have a fine day, such a day as we have here; but if not, you will be warm and bright indoors. Three cheers for those who give us the good things for this festival. I want you for a moment in the day to be all still, and spend the time in thanking our Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus for the great goodness shown to you and to me, and then pray for me that I may get quite well. Mrs Spurgeon and I both send our love to all the Stockwell family."

The boys and girls also were mindful of their absent friend and his wife. They sent a bright letter, signed by the first girl and boy for the year, wishing Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

"We did not write to you when you were so ill, but we prayed for you every day. We have been made so happy ever since we knew you were getting better. We hardly knew what to send you, but we have now agreed to send you an English flower to wear on Christmas Day. You have more lovely flowers in France, but we hope you will like these as well, as they come from your loving boys and girls in the Orphanage. We thank dear Mrs. Spurgeon for her love to us; and we are so glad that God has made her well enough to be with you at Mentone. Everybody is kind to us; and you are our dearest earthly friend.

"Signed for all the boys and girls,

"KATE BISHOP,
"EARNEST JAMES BARSON."

He sent also a most affectionate Christmas letter, asking that a blessing might rest upon all the family gatherings in the church.

"The Sword and Trowel" for February contained two brief addresses by Mr. Spurgeon, made at Mentone; one on the last evening of 1891, the other on the first morning of 1892. That he was able to break the long silence was a fact most encouraging to his loving friends. This hope was sustained through the early part of January. January 9, he completed the revision of the report of Sermon No. 2241, on Psalm 145: 7. "Never did he revise a sermon with greater ease or more delight," reports his secretary, Mr. Harrald. It was the last sermon which he revised.

We insert here the last photograph that was taken of Mr. Spurgeon. He was in his carriage January 8, when, without his knowledge, the photograph was taken and subsequently enlarged.

January 12, he took a drive. On the following day, he wrote a note for "The Sword and Trowel" on "The Bible and Modern Criticism." January 17, he expounded to a few friends, Psalm 103; and then offered the closing prayer. January 20, he went out to drive. On his return, his hand was so painful from gout that he went to bed early, never to rise again. On the day following, the gout affected his head. Tuesday, January 26, was the day appointed for bringing to the Tabernacle thank-offerings for the pastor's partial recovery. He dictated to Mr. Harrald a telegram: "Self and wife—one hundred pounds, hearty thank-offering toward Tabernacle general expenses. Love to all friends," and then he fell into unconsciousness, which continued during most of the remaining time. He had said to Mr. Harrald, "My work is done." And so it proved. On Sunday,

LATEST PICTURE OF MR. SPURGEON. Page 271.

STUDE_TS CARRYING C 'KET.

January 31, an hour before midnight, his wife, his brother, his son, and two other loving friends were beside him, and he was not, for God took him.

As soon as the event was known, the wires were choked with messages of sympathy from all over the world, including a telegram from the Prince and Princess of Wales. The news reached London on Monday morning, February 1. That day had been appointed, at Mr. Spurgeon's own suggestion, as a day of special prayer for the abatement of the influenza. Meetings were held in the morning, afternoon, and evening, and during each succeeding day of the week.

On Lord's Day, February 7, a great crowd, dressed in deep mourning, filled the house. In the evening, the Lord's Supper followed, the pastor's chair being left empty.

On Thursday, February 4, funeral services were held at Mentone, in the Scotch Presbyterian Church ; and then the body was taken to London by way of Dieppe and New Haven. The train reached Victoria Station, London, on Monday, February 8, at eleven o'clock. The olive wood coffin, covered with the palm branches sent from Mentone by Mrs. Spurgeon, was placed in the hearse, the great crowd standing with bared heads and often with streaming eyes. That night the sacred burden was placed in the great hall of the Tabernacle with a marble bust of Mr. Spurgeon above it on the lower platform.

On Thursday, from seven in the morning until seven in the evening, a great multitude, estimated at sixty thousand, passed through the hall and looked at the coffin, which was covered with flowers and wreaths. But it was especially desired by the church and by the family that his memory should be honored not so much by perishable flowers as by gifts to the work he had loved so much, to the College and

to the Orphanage. At the sides of the coffin were cards, on which were inscribed messages of love from his nearest kindred.

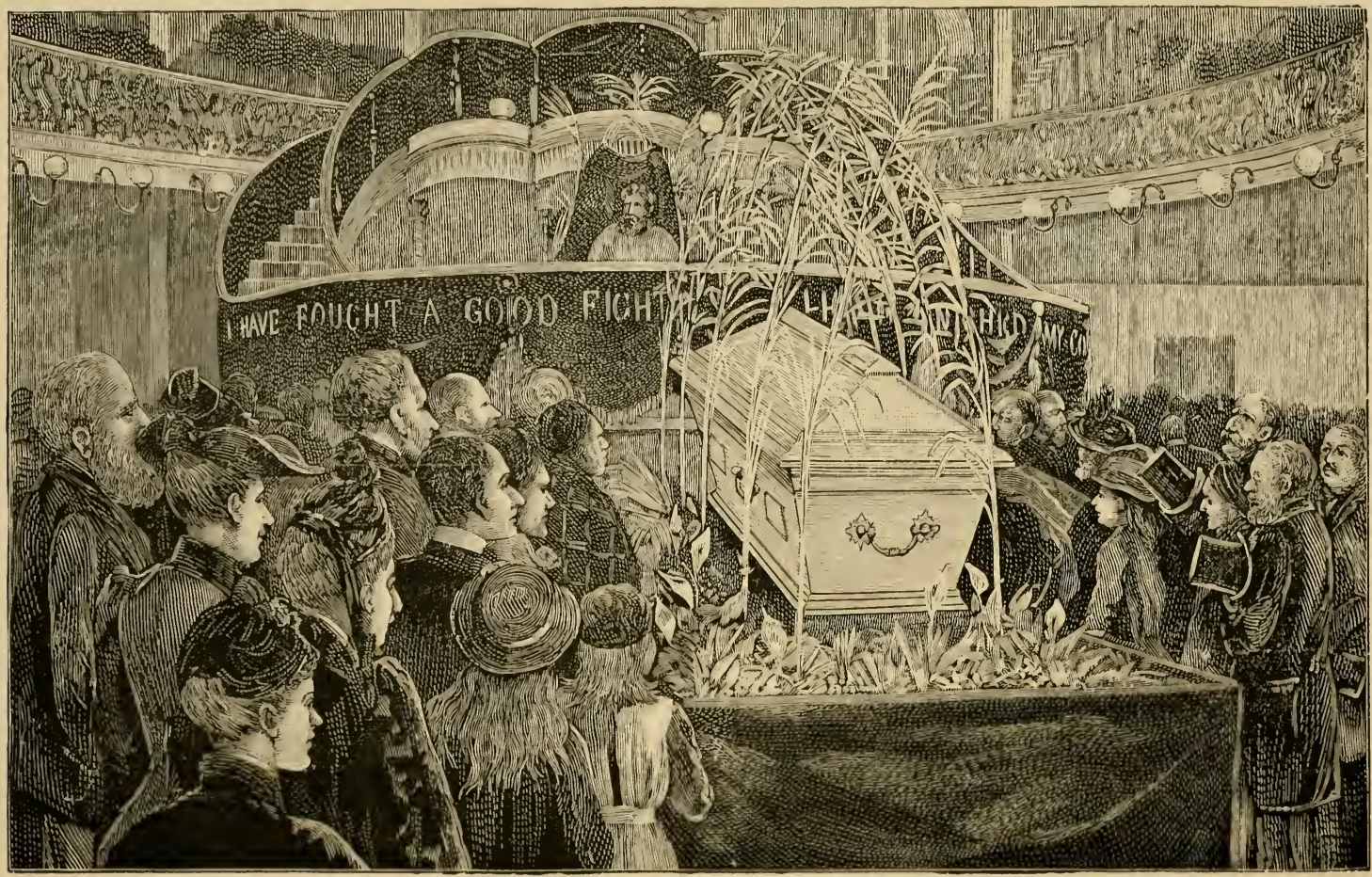
Wednesday was the great memorial day. In the morning the members of the Tabernacle Church assembled, Pastor James A. Spurgeon, with whom all hearts were in sympathy, conducting the services. President Angus, of Regent's Park College, a former pastor of the church, gave some reminiscences of former days and pointed out the present duty. Dr. Pierson read a letter from Mrs. Spurgeon, a portion of which we have already quoted: "To-day he has been a week in heaven. Oh, the bliss, the rapture of seeing his Saviour's face! Oh, the welcome home which awaited him as he left this sad earth! Not for a moment do I wish him back, though he was dearer to me than tongue can tell."

Dr. Pierson spoke of Mr. Spurgeon as an evangelist, as a pastor, and as a Christian believer.

Mr. J. W. Harrald, the secretary, spoke of the precious three months at Mentone.

In the noon interval a meeting of the Pastors' College Evangelical Association was held.

In the afternoon, ministers and students, representing all sections of the church, assembled in the Tabernacle. Dr. Maclaren, of Manchester, spoke of the spirit, the staple, and the spring of a successful ministry. In allusion to the simplicity of Mr. Spurgeon's preaching, he said: "I do not believe that any truth is so deep that it is not capable of expression in the English tongue which Bunyan and Spurgeon wielded." Canon Fleming spoke of his friendship of twenty-five years with Mr. Spurgeon. Dr. Monroe Gibson represented the English Presbyterian Synod, of



CASKET IN THE CHURCH.

which he is Moderator; Dr. Herber Evans the Congregational Union, and Dr. Stephenson the Wesleyan Conference. Dr. Pierson represented America.

In the evening the building was densely crowded with Christian workers of all denominations. George Williams, President of the London Young Men's Christian Association; Sir Arthur Blackwood, Canon Palmer, Colonel Griffin (representing the Baptist Union) each made an impressive address.

The last meeting opened at 10.15 P. M. The house was filled with those whose labors made it impossible for them to be present during the day. Mr. Sankey, Mr. Fullerton, Mr. J. Manton Smith were the speakers.

Thursday, February 11, was the day of the funeral. The last hymn which Mr. Spurgeon had ever given out, "The sands of time are sinking," was sung. An address was made by Dr. Pierson, and prayer offered by Rev. Newman Hall. The coffin was then borne out. The roads through which the procession passed were crowded on either side. The bells of the parish churches tolled, the shops and even the public houses were closed.

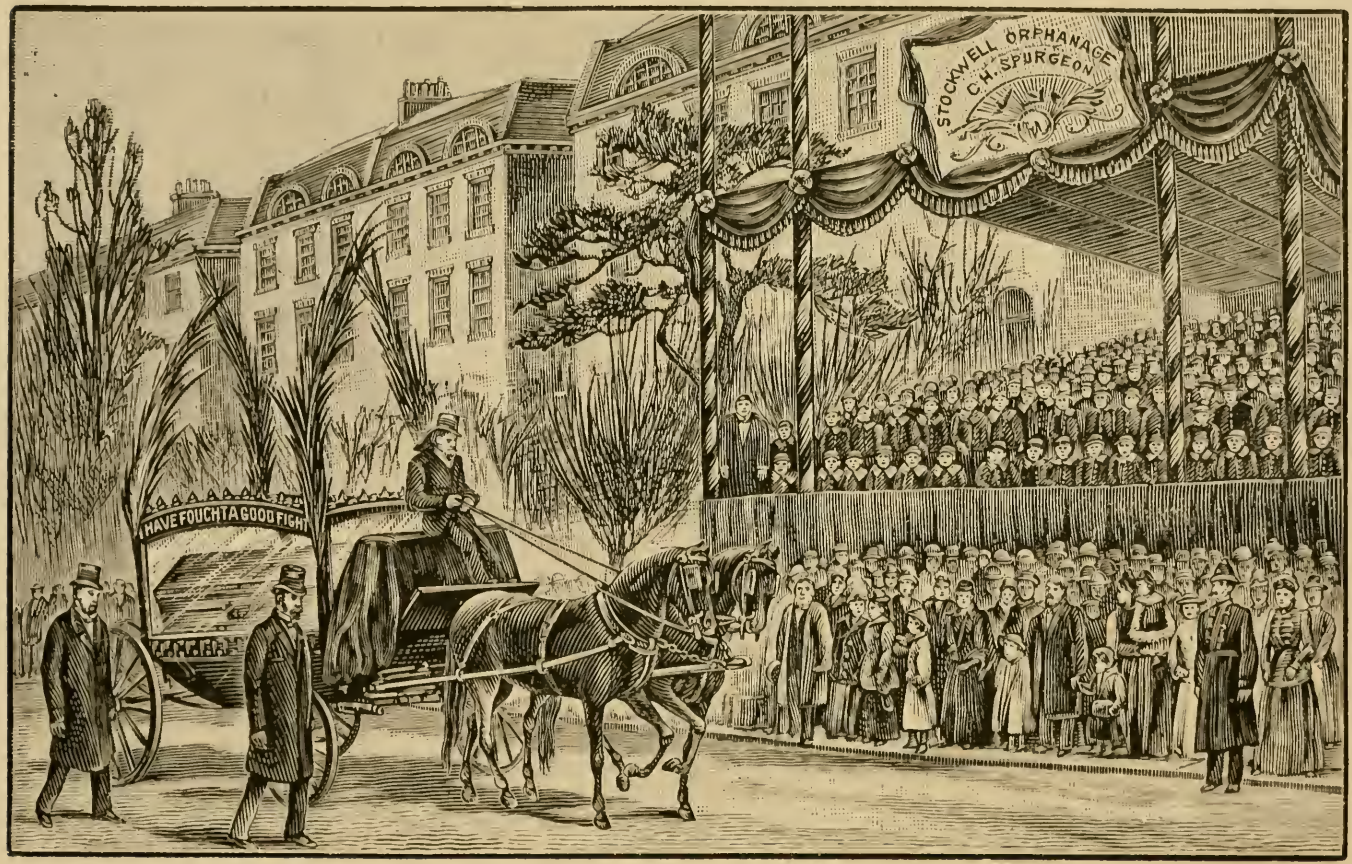
At the Stockwell Orphanage, the children, seated on a covered platform, watched the last honors to their benefactor. At the Norwood Cemetery Rev. Archibald G. Brown, his pupil and life-long friend, made an address of touching eloquence, bidding him farewell. Prayer was offered by Dr. Pierson. The benediction was pronounced by Rt. Rev. Randall T. Davidson, Lord Bishop of Rochester, who had expressed to Rev. James A. Spurgeon a desire to take part in the services at the grave.

And then they sadly left him in his grave near the resting place of the missionary Moffatt, to await the morning when those who sleep with Jesus, God shall bring with him.

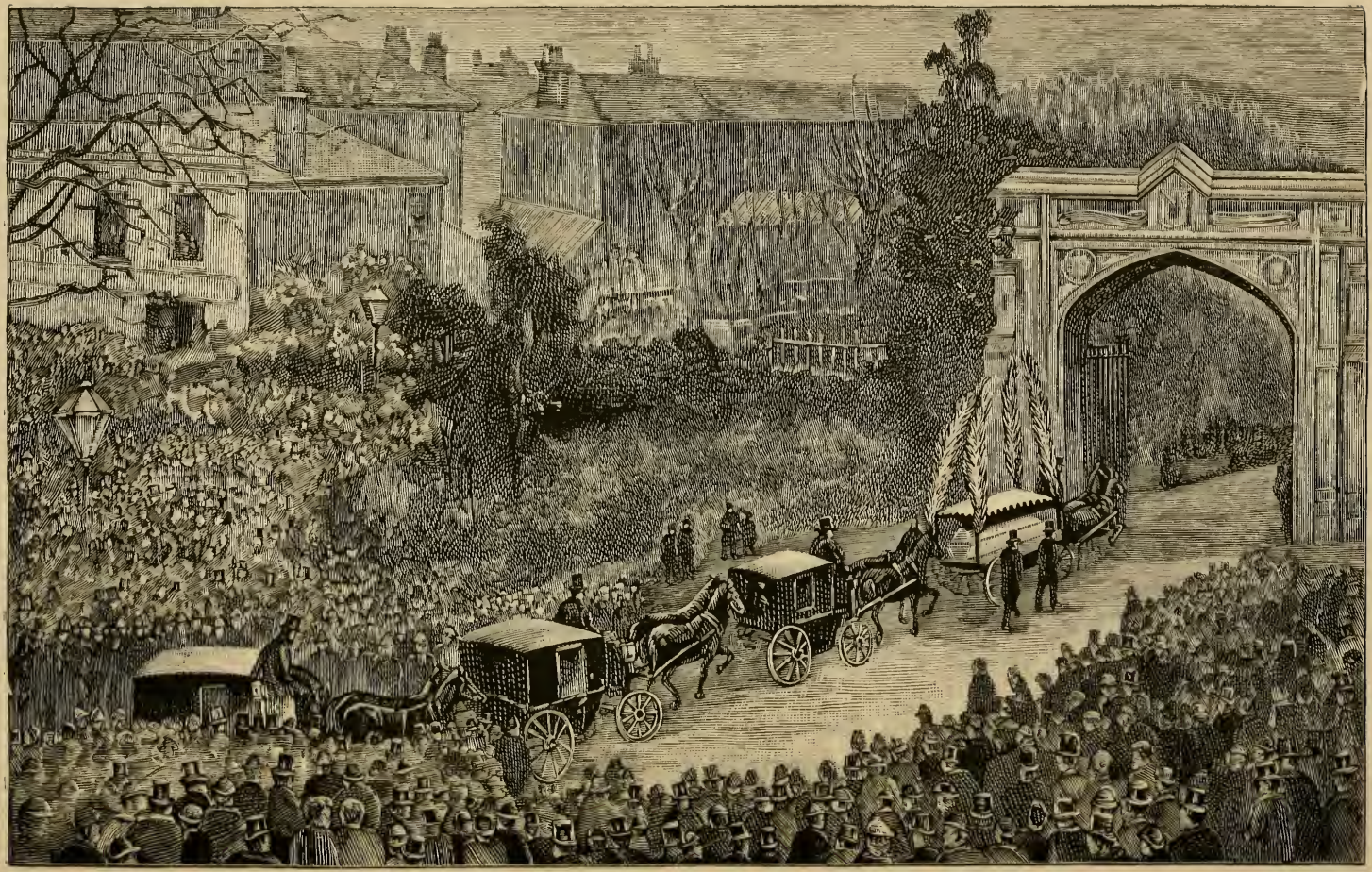
Meanwhile, memorial services were held wherever the English language is spoken. Nor was the interest confined to any one denomination. Nowhere were these expressions of feeling more heartfelt and general than in America. In Philadelphia a service was held by the Baptist Ministers' Conference, on Monday morning, February 8, in the Tabernacle Church, the Presbyterian Ministers' Meeting adjourning that the members might be present. Addresses were made by President H. G. Weston, Dr. Frederic Evans and others, and an elaborate tribute, drawn up by Dr. G. D. Boardman, was cabled to the Tabernacle. Another meeting was held in the Memorial Church on the evening of Thursday, the day of the funeral, in which ministers of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches took part. In New York, Boston, Chicago, and in nearly every city similar tributes were paid.

Never, within the memory of men now living, has there been so widespread and deep emotion. When Lincoln died there was no cable, and the news was ten days old here when it reached Europe, and twice that time elapsed before the echo from the Eastern Continent returned to us. Now the cable gave to all hearts one thought, and the Christian world stood uncovered at his grave.

We have endeavored to give a truthful and, so far as space and time were allowed us, an adequate portrayal of a noble and lovable man, an exalted character, a beneficent and divine life. We do not make any claim to have been unbiased, if in that term is implied aught of indifference. The reader may make any allowance that he thinks demanded for the fact that we have written under the spell of admiration and affection. And we freely confess that the



STOCKWELL ORPHANS SINGING AS PROCESSION PASSES.



ENTERING THE CEMETERY.

more we have studied him during these past weeks the more have these sentiments been deepened.

It is with regret that we close a labor which was of the heart. We seem to be leaving his presence. We sympathize with the feelings which he experienced as he finished the last page of "The Treasury of David."

Loving brother, brave soldier of Christ, loyal servant of God, champion of the Truth, father of the fatherless, great-souled hero, hail and farewell till the day break and the shadows flee away.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONTEMPORARY JUDGMENTS.

THE reader may desire to know how Mr. Spurgeon was estimated by the leading public opinion of his day. We append articles from London weekly papers, representing different phases of thought. The following is from "The Spectator" (Conservative-Unionist):

"The Nonconformist Churches, and indeed all churches, have lost in Mr. Spurgeon a man of considerable powers and of immense influence, which was persistently and strenuously exerted to do good. He was probably the most successful preacher to an audience of *bourgeois* who ever lived, and it is not difficult to understand why. There is an idea afloat that Englishmen are growing sceptical, and as regards one section of the cultivated, and the semi-Socialist division of the workmen, it is partly true; but the lower division of the middle class, a thick stratum in English society, for the most part retains, though it does not always follow, its old faith. Its members believe in Evangelicalism, qualified by shrewd sense, and find in that gospel a sufficient rule of conduct in most emergencies of life. They do not, therefore, wish their faith to be disturbed, or even much expounded in the Scotch way, but to be assumed or expressed clearly, and applied to all the contingencies of life by a preacher with gifts, the greater the gifts the better, but without originality of religious thought. They also desire, and this most heartily, that their teacher

should be a man who believes his message more earnestly than his audience do, who is visibly and unmistakably earnest in enthusiasm, who lives straight up to his own principles and their ideal, and who is independent enough to rebuke all backsliding with a certain energy. They found all these requirements satisfied to the full in Mr. Spurgeon. Gifted with a superb voice, and possessed by a theology which was exactly that of his congregation, the preacher poured out before them arguments which, nine times out of ten, contained nothing but common-sense applied to religion or the conduct of life, but which were so aptly and intelligibly expressed, so warmed by conviction, so familiar and yet so new, that they made on those who heard them all the impression of the loftiest eloquence. They convinced, if they did not exactly waken, and made thousands of ordinary men, exposed, sometimes in an unusual degree, to ordinary temptations distinctly stronger to resist them.

"His English was always admirable, though it was sometimes not refined; he was a master of felicitous illustration, drawn often from the homeliest things; and he knew how to become impressive, and occasionally drive a truth home with the startling force which comes from the unexpected. He was not a great orator, but he was for his audience a most rousing and convincing preacher. The influence of his words was, of course, materially aided both by his character and the independence of his position. He was the manliest of men, never posed, never disguised anything, would say his own thought, however unpopular it might be, and detested the fads which it has been a fashion of this half of the century to add to the Christian law. Believing in charity, he practiced it, and gave with both hands; but

he held that men should work for their living, and not sponge on the community, and hated the modern feeling of 'pity' for the thriftless and the idle. His opinion about all sorts of beggars, was summed up in his apophthegm, 'There should be patience and pity for poverty; but for laziness, give me a long whip.'

"Mr. Spurgeon was helped to independence, too, by his practical ability. He cared personally nothing about money; he could give away "like a prince;" but he had the faculty, often so painfully absent from the clergy, whether Established or Nonconformist, of managing large pecuniary affairs. Thousands might be given him, and it was certain not only that he would steal none—a trait now practically universal in English teachers of religion, who are trusted on that point as no priesthood ever has been in the world—but that he would spend the money wisely, would waste none on fads, and would have as clear a result for his cash as if he had been a shopkeeper buying stock. His orphanages are models of good management. His independence reacted on his spiritual influence, every listener feeling that what he said, he said because he thought it, and for no other earthly reason, and, combined with his habitual abstinence from cant—by which, in this place, we mean the utterance of words only because they have a pious effect—it gave weight to his eloquence and edge to his powers of persuasion. Mr. Spurgeon was a great preacher, first of all because he believed, and had the necessary gifts to be one; but his powers were visibly enlarged by his character, with its energy, its ability, as well as its determined independence."

The following is from the "Speaker" (Gladstone-Liberal):

"The tributes which have been paid to Mr. Spurgeon by the press of all sections of opinion have been so generous as well as just that they leave little to be said by those who held him in special regard. His was a great and striking individuality, and he had impressed it upon the imaginations of his fellow-countrymen as no other ecclesiastic of his time succeeded in doing. And this he secured solely in virtue of his merits and qualities as a minister of the church to which he belonged. Mr. Spurgeon was 'the pastor of the Tabernacle' and the chief of the organization which he had gradually built up around that place of worship. That was all. Yet his death is universally regarded as a loss to the nation at large, and the newspapers of every party and sect vie with each other in paying honor to his memory.

"What was the secret of this great man's success in life? Unquestionably the foundation of Mr. Spurgeon's success was his wonderful gift as a preacher. We said some months ago, when he was lying very ill, that among the natural orators of this generation he stood next to Mr. Bright. We see now that some are inclined to belittle his oratorical powers. It can only be because they have not themselves been 'under the wand of the magician.' No one who has will question the fact that Mr. Spurgeon was endowed with gifts as an orator such as hardly any other man of his time possessed. Of course, his eloquence was not like that of Mr. Gladstone or Canon Liddon, for example. It even differed in certain essentials from that of Mr. Bright, which, on the whole, it most nearly resembled. But of its own kind there was nothing to equal it in the pulpit of any church in the land. If the preacher at the Tabernacle never assayed "the poet's star-crowned harp to sweep;" if he scrupulously

avoided the ornate flights of eloquence which are so dear to most orators,—he never failed to make his admirable prose sink even into the most unwilling ears. Many men went to the Tabernacle, especially in its early days, prepared to scoff. Few came away without owning that they had listened to a man who had literally compelled them to attend to all he said, and whose bright, simple, picturesque, and always forcible utterances were pitched in a key which attuned itself to every ear, and found entrance to every heart.

"But other churches have had preachers of an eloquence hardly inferior to that of Mr. Spurgeon. How comes it that they never won the hearts of the people of Great Britain as he did? Canon Liddon, whose name occurs so naturally when we speak of pulpit eloquence; Bishop Alexander, Archbishop Magee, and many others, might fairly have competed, so far as mere gifts of speech were concerned, with the pastor of the Tabernacle. Yet not one of them held his place in English life, or anything approaching to it. We mean no disrespect to these eminent men when we say that Mr. Spurgeon's triumph, his unrivalled success in holding the hearts of so large a body of his fellow-countrymen, was distinctly a triumph of character. It was not merely because of his pulpit eloquence, it was certainly not because of any intellectual superiority to his fellow-teachers and preachers, that he was trusted and esteemed so much above them all. It was because the great British public had arrived at the conviction that he was absolutely sincere, simple, unpretending, and straightforward. There have been preachers of rare gifts in the Free Churches of England and Scotland who would command crowded congregations whenever they appeared, who had a large and devoted fol-

lowing of admirers, but who could never touch or reach the larger public because of a certain suspicion of charlatanry or self-seeking attaching to them. For thirty years past Mr. Spurgeon has been as free from the faintest suggestion of such a suspicion as it was possible for any human being to be; and men everywhere have known that it was his Master, not himself, on whose service he was bent.

"In this triumph of personal character, and in one other feature of his life's-work, we may read the secret of his astonishing success. That other feature was the stern fidelity he showed from first to last to the Puritan creed of his forefathers. In this, as in everything else, his motto was 'Thorough!' With him, at least, there was no tampering with modern doubts, modern speculations, new discoveries in science, the higher criticism. Never for a moment did he waver in his conviction that the truth he had learned as a boy was everything. The world, sweeping onwards, finds the stars which shone of old with so clear and steady a lustre changing their place in the firmament and growing dim with the growing years, whilst new stars spring into view and draw to themselves the wondering gaze of the multitude. For Mr. Spurgeon, as for all of us, new stars might spring into being; but to his mind they could have only one purpose, one mission—the renewing and extending of the glory of the Sun of his worship. It is something in a faithless age, or, in what is still worse, an indifferent and invertebrate age, to meet with one whose faith can withstand every assault, whose trust would remain unshaken if all the world were to turn against him. And the creed to which Mr. Spurgeon clung with this ardent love and confidence was the creed which the great mass of English people had been taught from their cradles upwards. Is it wonderful

that when the old Puritanism was preached, not merely with such eloquence, but with such genuine fervour of conviction, the preacher should have rallied round himself thousands and scores of thousands who found in him the very champion and leader for whom they had long been hoping and praying? Narrow-minded, bigoted, crude, ignorant—all these terms of reproach were flung in turn at Mr. Spurgeon, and they hurt him no more than did the passing breeze. Nor can those who knew him and who knew his preaching forget that, despite the stern fidelity which he showed to a creed that is no longer that of the world, he had a heart filled with love for his fellow-creatures, with compassion for the sinner, with the burning desire that when the end of all things had come, and the Great Account was closed, no human soul which had found itself moved by the Divine Spirit might fail of salvation. And with it all he was no priest. Never once were the sympathies of a priest-hating people ruffled by the slightest assumption of spiritual authority on the part of their teacher. He was a plain man like themselves, with no pretension to ecclesiastical or priestly powers, satisfied to be the minister and servant of the Lord he loved.

"It was thus that the good man we mourn to-day drew to himself, not merely the admiration, but the confidence and affection of a body of men and women whose numbers cannot be counted, but who are to be found in every corner of the world in which the English tongue is spoken. And whilst to hundreds of thousands of his fellow-creatures he ministered in his own way, week by week, in all spiritual truths, he exercised an influence over those who had little sympathy with his creed which can hardly be calculated and which was wholly for good. For the moment his loss

seems well-nigh irreparable, not to his congregation only, but to London and his country."

The following is from the "British Weekly" (Evangelical-Undenominational-Liberation):

"He has fallen like a tower, and his removal means for many a change in the whole landscape of life. A London Tory newspaper spoke of his death as attracting much less attention than that of Cardinal Manning. What did the children at the schools, the servants in the kitchen, the cottars in the Highlands, the old women in wretched garrets, know of Manning? But all these—all the nation, for the nation is Christian still—knew Spurgeon. In Scotland he was even more regarded than in England, and in America perhaps his fame stood higher than anywhere else. His years were not many when he died, but he had lived long, and had maintained to the very last the splendor of his fame. Had Mr. Gladstone died at Mr. Spurgeon's age, he would by this time have been completely forgotten. Even as it was, Mr. Spurgeon was to the majority of his countrymen a still more conspicuous figure than Mr. Gladstone; it is not too much to say he was venerated beyond all other men.

"The popular judgment is often mistaken; but it may be trusted to detect a charlatan *in time*. For the public ear, though easy to gain, is exceedingly hard to keep. It says much both for the power and the essential integrity of Mr. Spurgeon that he caught it when a mere boy, and never lost it for a moment. This was due first of all to his oratorical power. Two orators of the first rank have appeared in our time: Mr. Bright and Mr. Spurgeon. His marvelous voice, clear as a silver bell's and winning as a woman's, rose up against the surging multitude, and without effort

entered every ear. The homely, sturdy Englishman, with his air of composed mastery, his unfailing command of lucid Saxon, his power to rise on occasion to the heights of eloquence, his compassionate understanding of the life of his people, and above all his yearning for their salvation, will not easily pass from the nation's memory and heart. Mr. Spurgeon's almost supernatural keenness of observation was a great element of his influence. A well-known neighbor of his has never been able to recognize his members, because he cannot recall faces. It is not a fault; but it is a misfortune. Mr. Spurgeon at one time, as he sat on his platform, could name every one of his five thousand members. He also remembered even visitors with whom he had a very slight acquaintance; and when they came to the Tabernacle, instantly detected them. He was pretty sure to contrive some way of making signs to them before the service ended—in manners sometimes quaint enough.

"He was, however, much more than a great orator. The present writer, thrown on one occasion for six months where books were scarce, commenced to read a complete set of the "Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit," and went through all the volumes. We can hardly imagine any one doing this without receiving a profound and permanent impression. More, the astonishing ability of the preacher is as marked as his eloquence and his sincerity. In this respect he has hardly received justice. Many talk still of his "crab-apple fertility," and compare him compassionately with such men as Liddon. In truth, there was no comparison; in point of sheer ability, Spurgeon was as far above Liddon as Liddon was above Farrar. As an unprejudiced and competent critic, the Rev. H. R. Haweis said, many years ago: "It is perfectly extraordinary how

able and powerful the great Baptist can be within his very narrow doctrinal limits." We do not think that he succeeded to any great extent outside of the sermons, although his "John Ploughman" publications contain much racy matter. In the sermons there are many passages which a really catholic anthology of English prose would not omit, and an informing spirit which hardly breathes among us now.

"It may seem a hard saying, but it cannot be doubted that his theology was a main element in his lasting attraction. Why has Calvinism flourished so exceedingly in the damp, low-lying, thickly-peopled, struggling regions of South London—where James Wells, an utterly uneducated man, and a Calvinist so high that he thought Mr. Spurgeon a dangerous heretic, divided the honors with his young neighbor, and had such a funeral as South London had never seen before? To begin with, all religions for the masses are essentially the same. A Roman Catholic theologian, Father Dalgairns, says: "Go and preach your uncertain hell and your obscure atonement in the streets of our large towns, how many proselytes will you gain among the masses, the stench of whose corruptions goes up to heaven more foully every day? You tempt them by the dubious boon of a universal salvation, but in so doing you deprive them of the consolation of a Saviour." Mr. Spurgeon always made salvation a wonderful, a supernatural thing—won through battle and agony and garments rolled in blood.

"This great and hard-won salvation was sure; that is, 'it did not stand in the creature'; it rested absolutely with God. It was not of man, nor of the will of the flesh. Mr. Spurgeon's hearers had many of them missed all the prizes

of life; but God did not choose them for the reasons that move man's preference, else their case were hopeless. Their election was of grace. And as he chose them, he would keep them. The perseverance of the saints is a doctrine without meaning to the majority of Christians. But many a poor girl with the love of Christ and goodness in her heart, working her fingers to the bone for a pittance that just keeps her alive, with the temptations of the streets around her, and the river beside her, listened with all her soul when she heard that Christ's sheep could never perish. Many a struggling tradesman tempted to dishonesty; many a widow with penury and loneliness before her, were lifted above all, taught to look through and over the years coming thick with sorrow and conflict, and anticipate a place in the Church Triumphant.

"There is a very prevalent notion that the doctrine of a universal Fatherhood as often preached, springs from a truer charity and is more comforting than the old way of teaching that God is the Father of his children through faith. A man says, 'God is the Father of the East-end of London,' and thinks he has uttered a consoling truth. What Mr. Spurgeon felt was that the Fatherhood of God must mean a great deal more than that. In a sense God is the Father of the most degraded, but what does that come to? Before we know the Fatherly nature the Son must reveal it, and if we dare to say it, there is something beyond that. The going out of the divine heart to poor, lost, guilty creatures is an expression of the lower deep of love in God's own being, and means something—means everything for as many as receive it. It is not the cold comfort, the unsheltering shadow of an empty phrase.

"The very poor—it must be remembered that South Lon-

don is the poorest part of the metropolis—are beginning to hope that councils and parliaments will do much for them. They may find it so, but Mr. Spurgeon made little of such things. He taught them—the staple of his sermon is—that now in the living communion of the soul with Christ, they might have all the joy they needed. A man too wise, too experienced, not to know how slowly the battles of the poor are won, and how little their victories often yield—he insisted on the joy and peace in believing, which the world could neither give nor take away. Life might pursue its hard, monotonous way of obscure toil, scanty wages, and a great weight of care, but over it all there might rest a soft and sacred light. The common people heard this gladly, and well they might, for it is so. Perhaps when they have had a little more experience of the politician they will hear it more gladly than ever.

"Personally Mr. Spurgeon was keenly alive to the humorous side of things—witty, brilliant, and sometimes exuberant. But as is so often the case with such natures, his thoughts turned habitually to the wistful, pathetic, melancholy side of life. George Herbert's lines fitted him well:

'Not that he may not here
Taste of the cheer,
But as birds drink and straight lift up their head,
So must he sip and think
Of better drink
He may attain to after he is dead.

'But as his joys are double,
So is his trouble;
He hath two winters, other things but one;
Both frosts and thoughts do nip
And bite his lip;
And he of all things fears two deaths alone.'

"In manner he was scrupulously and even anxiously

courteous. For long he mixed little in society; he was busy with his tremendous labor, and incessantly occupied in reading. He had a great collection of commentaries arranged in order round the wall of his sanctum, and never preached without consulting each on his text. Though his habits of preparation were peculiar, they were thorough and exact. Never did he trifle with the chief duty of his sacred office.

"But we must leave many things unsaid. Never has a man with such an experience appeared in the Christian church; never one who has addressed so many of his fellow creatures on the things of God; never one the obvious results of whose ministry have been so great. 'I shall never hear you calling,' we say as we think of that unforgotten voice. But its echoes will linger when the strife of tongues is passing. Multitudes will think with affectionate and respectful sympathy of the bereaved wife and sons, and of the great church over which he presided. We have all lost much, but he has gained more. His was a nature little fitted for many things that befell him in the last lacerating years—less fitted still for the long inaction which was the best his physicians dared to hope for. Better for him, perhaps, that he has gone up the shining road."

APPENDIX.

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."—Mark 16 : 15, 16.

ON the occasion when our Lord sent forth the eleven to preach the gospel to every creature, he "appeared unto them as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them who had seen him after he was risen;" from which we may surely gather, that, to preach the word, the Lord was pleased to choose imperfect men—men, too, who of themselves were very weak in the grace of faith in which it was most important that they should excel. Faith is the conquering grace, and is of all things the main requisite in the preacher of the word; and yet the honored men who were chosen to be the leaders of the divine crusade needed a rebuke concerning their unbelief. Why was this? Because the Lord has ordained evermore that we should have this treasure in *earthen vessels*, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. If you should find a perfect minister, then might the praise and honor of his usefulness accrue to man; but God is frequently pleased to select for eminent usefulness men evidently honest and sincere, but who have some manifest infirmity by which all the glory is cast off from them and laid upon himself, and upon himself alone. Let it never be supposed that we who are God's ministers either excuse our faults or pretend to perfection. We do not base the claims of God's truth upon the spotlessness of our characters, but on the fact that it comes from him. You have believed in spite of our infirmities, and not because of our virtues. We come unto you often with much tremb-

ling, sorrowing over our follies and weaknesses, but we deliver to you God's Word as God's Word, and we beseech you to receive it, not as coming from us, but as proceeding from the eternal and thrice-holy God.

Our Lord having thus given us an insight into the character of the persons whom he has chosen to proclaim his truth, then goes on to deliver to the chosen champions their commission for the holy war. I pray you mark the words with solemn care. He sums up in a few words the whole of their work, and at the same time foretells the result of it, telling them that some would doubtless believe and so be saved, and some on the other hand would not believe and would most certainly, therefore, be damned—that is, condemned forever to the penalties of God's wrath. The lines containing the commission of our ascended Lord are certainly of the utmost importance, and demand devout attention and implicit obedience, not only from all who aspire to the work of the ministry, but also from all who hear the message of mercy. A clear understanding of these words is absolutely necessary to our success in the Master's work; for if we do not understand the commission, it is not at all likely that we shall discharge it aright. To alter these words were more than impertinence: it would involve the crime of treason against the authority of Christ and the best interests of the souls of men.

Wherever the apostles went they met with obstacles to the preaching of the gospel, and the more open and effectual the utterance, the more numerous were the adversaries. These brave men so wielded the sword of the Spirit as to put to flight all their foes; and this they did not by craft and guile, but by making a direct cut at the error which impeded them. Never did they dream for a moment of adapting the gospel to the unhallowed tastes or prejudices of the people, but at once directly and boldly they brought down with both hands the mighty sword of the Spirit upon the crown of the opposing error. This morning, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, my helper and defence, I shall try to do the same; and if I should provoke some hostility—if I should through speaking what I believe to be the truth lose the friendship of some

and stir up the enmity of more—I cannot help it. As I am soon to appear before my Master's bar, I will this day, if ever in my life, bear my testimony for truth, and run all risks. The Lord knoweth I have nothing in my heart but the purest love to the souls of those whom I feel imperatively called to rebuke sternly in the Lord's name. Among my hearers and readers, some will censure if not condemn me, but I cannot help it. It is sweet to every one to be applauded, but if for the sake of the comforts of respectability and the smiles of men any Christian minister shall keep back a part of his testimony, his Master at the last shall require it at his hands.

I find that the great error which we have to contend with is one in direct opposition to my text, well known to you as the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. We will confront this dogma with the assertion that *baptism without faith saves no one.* The text says, "He *that believeth* and is baptized shall be saved," but whether a man be baptized or no, it asserts that "*he that believeth not* shall be damned." So that baptism does not save the unbeliever; nay, it does not in any degree exempt him from the common doom of all the ungodly. He may have baptism, or he may not have baptism; but if he believeth not, he shall in any case be most surely damned. Let him be baptized by immersion, or be sprinkled, in his infancy or adult age, if he be not led to put his trust in Jesus Christ—if he remaineth an unbeliever—then this terrible doom is pronounced upon him, "He that believeth not shall be damned." I am not aware that any Protestant church in England teaches the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, except one, and that happens to be the corporation, which with none too much humility, calls itself *the* Church of England. This very powerful sect does not teach this doctrine merely through a section of its ministers, who might charitably be considered as evil branches of the vine, but it openly declares this doctrine in its own appointed standard, the Book of Common Prayer, and that in words so express, that while language is the channel of conveying intelligible sense, no process short of violent wresting from their plain meaning can ever make them say anything else.

Here are the words—we quote them from the Catechism which is intended for the instruction of youth, and is naturally very plain and simple, since it would be foolish to trouble the youth with metaphysical refinements. The child is asked its name, and is questioned, "Who gave you this name?" "My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Is not this definite and plain enough? I prize the words for their candor: they could not speak more plainly. Three times over the thing is put, lest there should be any doubt in it. The word *regeneration* may, by some sort of juggling, be made to mean something else, but here there can be no misunderstanding. The child is not only made "a member of Christ,"—union to Jesus is no mean spiritual gift,—but he is made in baptism "the child of God" also; and, since the rule is, "if children, then heirs," he is also made "an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." I venture to say that while honesty remains on earth the meaning of these words will not admit of dispute. It is clear as noonday that, as the Rubric hath it, "Fathers, mothers, masters, and dames are to cause their children, servants or apprentices," no matter how wicked they may be, to learn the Catechism, and to say that in baptism they were made members of Christ and children of God.

The form for the administration of this baptism is scarcely less plain and outspoken, seeing that thanks are expressly returned unto Almighty God because the person baptized is regenerated: "Then shall the priest say, 'Seeing, now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits; and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning.'" Nor is this all; for, to leave no mistake, we have the words of the thanksgiving prescribed: "Then shall the priest say, 'We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church.'"

This, then, is the clear and unmistakable teaching of a church calling itself Protestant. I am not now dealing at all with the question of infant baptism: I have nothing to do with that at this time. I am now considering the question of baptismal regeneration, whether in adults or infants, or ascribed to sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. Here is a church which teaches every Lord's Day in the Sunday-school, and should, according to the Rubric, teach openly in the church, all children that they were made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven when they were baptized! Here is a professedly Protestant church, which, every time its minister goes to the font, declares that every person there receiving baptism is there and then "regenerated and grafted into the body of Christ's church."

"But," I hear many good people exclaim, "there are many good clergymen in the church who do not believe in baptismal regeneration!" To this my answer is prompt,—Why, then, do they belong to a church which teaches that doctrine, in the plainest terms? I am told that many in the Church of England preach against her own teaching. I know they do, and herein I rejoice in their enlightenment, but I question, gravely question, their morality. To take oath that I sincerely assent or consent to a doctrine which I do not believe, would to my conscience appear little short of perjury, if not absolute, downright perjury; but those who do so must be judged by their Lord. For me to take money for defending what I do not believe—for me to take the money of a church, and then to preach against what are most evidently its doctrines—I say *for me* to do this (I shall not judge the peculiar views of other men), for me or for any other simple, honest man to do so, were an atrocity so great that, if I had perpetrated the deed, I should consider myself out of the pale of truthfulness, honesty, and common morality. For clergymen to swear or say that they give their solemn assent and consent to what they do not believe, is one of the grossest pieces of immorality perpetrated, and is most pestilential in its influence, since it directly teaches men to lie whenever it seems necessary to do so in order to get a living or increase their supposed

usefulness: it is in fact an open testimony from priestly lips that, at least in ecclesiastical matters, falsehood may express truth, and truth itself is a mere unimportant nonentity. I know of nothing more calculated to debauch the public mind than a want of straightforwardness in ministers; and when worldly men hear ministers denouncing the very things which their own Prayer Book teaches, they imagine that words have no meaning among ecclesiastics, and that vital differences in religion are merely a matter of tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum, and that it does not much matter what a man does believe so long as he is charitable toward other people. If baptism does regenerate people, let the fact be preached with a trumpet tongue, and let no man be ashamed of his belief in it. If this be really their creed, by all means let them have full liberty for its propagation.

My brethren, those are honest churchmen in this matter who, subscribing to the Prayer Book, believe in baptismal regeneration, and preach it plainly. God forbid that we should censure those who believe that baptism saves the soul, because they adhere to a church which teaches the same doctrine. So far they are honest men; and in England, wherever else, let them never lack a full toleration. Let us oppose their teaching by all scriptural and intelligent means, but let us respect their courage in plainly giving us their views. I hate their doctrine, but I love their honesty; and as they speak what they believe to be true, let them speak it out, and the more clearly the better. Out with it, sirs, be it what it may, but do let us know what you mean. For my part, I love to stand foot to foot with an honest foeman. To open warfare, bold and true hearts raise no objections but the ground of quarrel; it is covert enmity which we have most cause to fear and best reason to loathe. If men believe baptism works regeneration, let them say so, but if they do not so believe it in their hearts, and yet subscribe, and yet more, get their livings by subscribing to words asserting it, let them find congenial associates among men who can equivocate and shuffle, for honest men will neither ask nor accept their friendship.

We ourselves are not dubious on this point: we protest

that persons are not saved by being baptized. In such an audience as this, I am almost ashamed to go into the matter, because you surely know better than to be misled. Nevertheless, for the good of others we will drive at it. We hold that persons are not saved by baptism; for we think, first of all, that *it seems out of character with the spiritual religion which Christ came to teach*, that he should make salvation depend upon mere ceremony. Judaism might possibly absorb the ceremony by way of type into her ordinances essential to eternal life, for it was a religion of types and shadows. The false religions of the heathen might inculcate salvation by a physical process, but Jesus Christ claims for his faith that it is purely spiritual, and how could he connect regeneration with a peculiar application of water? I cannot see how it would be a spiritual gospel, but I can see how it would be mechanical, if I were sent forth to teach that the mere dropping of so many drops upon the brow, or even the plunging of a person in water, could save the soul. This seems to me to be the most mechanical religion now existing, and to be on a par with the praying windmills of Thibet, or the climbing up and down of Pilate's staircase to which Luther subjected himself in the days of his darkness. / The operation of water baptism does not appear even to my faith to touch the point involved in the regeneration of the soul. What is the necessary connection between water and the overcoming of sin? I cannot see any connection which can exist between sprinkling, or immersion, and regeneration, so that the one shall necessarily be tied to the other in the absence of faith. Used by faith, had God commanded it, miracles might be wrought; but without faith or even consciousness, as in the case of babes, how can spiritual benefits be connected necessarily with the sprinkling of water? If this be your teaching, that regeneration goes with baptism, I say that it looks like the teaching of a spurious church, which has craftily invented a mechanical salvation to deceive ignorant minds, rather than the teaching of the most profoundly spiritual of all teachers, who rebuked Scribes and Pharisees for regarding outward rites as more important than inward grace.

But it strikes me that a more forcible argument is, that *the dogma is not supported by facts.* Are all persons who are baptized children of God? Well, let us look at the divine family. Let us mark their resemblance to their glorious Parent! Am I untruthful if I say that thousands of those who were baptized in their infancy are now in our jails? You can ascertain the fact, if you please, by application to prison authorities. Do you believe that these men, many of whom have been living by plunder, felony, burglary, or forgery, are regenerate? If so, the Lord deliver us from such regeneration. Are these villains members of Christ? If so, Christ has sadly altered since the day when he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Has he really taken baptized drunkards and harlots to be members of his body? Do you not revolt at the supposition? It is a well-known fact that baptized persons have been hanged. Surely it can hardly be right to hang the inheritors of the kingdom of heaven! Our sheriffs have much to answer for when they officiate at the execution of the children of God, and suspend the members of Christ on the gallows! What a detestable farce is that which is transacted at the open grave, when "a dear brother" who has died drunk is buried in a "sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life," and the prayer that "when we shall depart this life we may rest in Christ, as our hope is that this our brother doth." He is a regenerate brother, who, having defiled the village by constant uncleanness and bestial drunkenness, died without a sign of repentance; and yet the professed minister of God solemnly accords him funeral rites which are denied to unbaptized innocents, and puts the reprobate into the earth in "sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life." If old Rome in her worst days ever perpetrated a grosser piece of imposture than this, I do not read things aright; if it does not require a Luther to cry down this hypocrisy as much as Popery ever did, then I do not even know that twice two make four. Do we find—we who baptize on profession of faith, and baptize by immersion in a way which is confessed to be correct, though not allowed by some to be absolutely necessary to its validity—do we, who baptize

in the name of the Sacred Trinity as others do, do we find that baptism regenerates? *We do not.* Neither in the righteous nor the wicked do we find regeneration wrought by baptism. We have never met with one believer, however instructed in divine things, who could trace his regeneration to his baptism; and on the other hand, we confess it with sorrow, but still with no surprise, that we have seen those whom we have ourselves baptized, according to apostolic precedent, go back into the world and wander into the foulest sin, and their baptism has scarcely been so much as a restraint to them, because they have not believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Facts all show that whatever good there may be in baptism, it certainly does not make a man "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," or else many thieves, whoremongers, drunkards, fornicators, and murderers are members of Christ, the children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. Facts, brethren, are dead against this popish doctrine; and facts are stubborn things.

Yet further, I am persuaded *that the performance styled baptism by the Prayer Book is not at all likely to regenerate and save.* How is the thing done? One is very curious to know when one hears of an operation which makes men members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, how the thing is done. It must in itself be a holy thing, truthful in all its details, and edifying in every portion. Now, we will suppose we have a company gathered around the water, be it more or less, and the process of regeneration is about to be performed. We will suppose them all to be *godly people.* The clergyman officiating is a profound believer in the Lord Jesus, and the father and mother are exemplary Christians, and the godfathers and godmothers are all gracious persons. We will suppose this: it is a supposition fraught with charity, but it may be correct. What are these godly people supposed to say? Let us look to the Prayer Book. The clergyman is supposed to tell these people, "Ye have heard also that our Lord Jesus Christ hath promised in his gospel to grant all these things that ye have prayed for: which promise he, for his part, will most surely keep

and perform. Wherefore, after this promise made by Christ, this infant must also faithfully, for his part, promise by you that are his sureties (until he come of age to take it upon himself) that he will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's Holy Word, and obediently keep his commandments." This small child is to promise to do this; or, more truly, others are to promise, and even vow that he shall do so.

But we must not break the quotation, and therefore let us return to the Book: "I demand, therefore, dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow, nor be led by them?" Answer: "I renounce them all." That is to say, in the name and behalf of this tender infant about to be baptized, these godly people, these enlightened Christian people, these who know better, who are not dupes, who know all the while that they are promising impossibilities, renounce on behalf of this child what they find it very hard to renounce for themselves,—"all covetous desires of the world and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that they will not follow nor be led by them." How can they harden their faces to utter such a false promise, such a mockery of renunciation, before the presence of the Father Almighty? Might not angels weep as they hear the awful promise uttered! Then in the presence of High Heaven they profess on behalf of this child that he steadfastly believes the creed, when they know, or pretty shrewdly judge, that the little creature is not yet a steadfast believer in anything, much less in Christ's going down to hell. Mark, they do not say merely that the babe *shall* believe the creed, but they affirm that he does; for they answer in the child's name, "All this we steadfastly believe." Not *we* steadfastly believe, but *I*, the little baby here, unconscious of all their professions and confessions of faith. In answer to the question, "Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?" they reply for the infant, "That is my desire." Surely the infant has no desire in the matter, or at the least no one has been authorized to

declare any desires on his behalf. But this is not all; for then these godly, intelligent people next promise on behalf of the infant that "he shall obediently keep all God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life."

Now, I ask you, dear friends, you who know what true religion means, can you walk in all God's holy commandments yourselves? Dare you make this day a vow on your own part, that you would renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh? Dare you, before God, make such a promise as that? You desire such holiness; you earnestly strive after it; but you look for it from God's promise, not from your own. If you dare make such vows, I doubt your knowledge of your own hearts and of the spirituality of God's law. But even if you could do this for yourself, would you venture to make such a promise for any other person?—for the best-born infant on earth? Come, brethren, what say you? Is not your reply ready and plain? There is not room for two opinions among men determined to observe the truth in all their ways and words. I can understand a simple, ignorant rustic, who has never learned to read, doing all this at the command of a priest and under the eye of a squire. I can even understand persons doing this when the Reformation was in its dawn, and men had newly crept out of the darkness of Popery; but I cannot understand, gracious, godly people standing at the font to insult the All-gracious Father with vows and promises framed upon a fiction, and involving practical falsehood. How dare intelligent believers in Christ utter words which they know in their conscience to be wickedly aside from truth? When I shall be able to understand the process by which gracious men so accommodate their consciences, even then I shall have a confirmed belief that the God of truth never did and never will confirm a spiritual blessing of the highest order in connection with the utterance of such false promises and untruthful vows. My brethren, does it not strike you that declarations so fictitious are not likely to be connected with a new birth wrought by the Spirit of truth?

I have not done with this point: I must take another case, and suppose the sponsors and others to be *ungodly;* and that is no hard supposition, for in many cases, we know that godfathers and parents have no more thought of religion than that idolatrous hallowed stone around which they gather. When these sinners have taken their places, what are they about to say? Why, they are about to make the solemn vows I have already recounted in your hearing. Totally irreligious they are, but yet they promise for the baby what they never did, and never thought of doing, for themselves,—they promise on behalf of this child, "that he will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's Holy Word, and obediently keep his commandments." My brethren, do not think I speak severely here. Really, I think there is something here to make mockery for devils. Let every honest man lament that ever God's church should tolerate such a thing as this, and that there should be found gracious people who will feel grieved because I, in all kindness of heart, rebuked the atrocity. Unregenerate sinners promising for a poor babe that he shall keep all God's holy commandments, which they themselves wantonly break every day! How can anything but the longsuffering of God endure this? What! not speak against it? The very stones in the street might cry out against the infamy of wicked men and women promising that another should renounce the devil and all his works, while they themselves serve the devil and do his works with greediness! As a climax to all this, I am asked to believe that God accepts that wicked promise, and, as the result of it, regenerates that child. You cannot believe in regeneration by this operation, whether saints or sinners are the performers. Take them to be godly, then they are wrong for doing what their conscience must condemn; view them as ungodly, and they are wrong for promising what they know they cannot perform; and in neither case can God accept such worship, much less infallibly append regeneration to such a baptism as this.

But you will say, "Why do *you* cry out against it?" I cry out against it because I believe that baptism does not save the soul, and that *the preaching of it has a wrong*

and evil influence upon men. We meet with persons who, when we tell them that they must be born again, assure us that they *were* born again when they were baptized. The number of these persons is increasing, fearfully increasing, until all grades of society are misled by this belief. How can any stand up in his pulpit and say "Ye must be born again" to his congregation, when he has already assured them, by his own "unfeigned assent and consent" to it, that they are themselves, every one of them, born again in baptism. What has he to do with them? Why, my dear friends, the gospel then has no voice; they have rammed this ceremony down its throat, and it cannot speak to rebuke sin. The man who has been baptized or sprinkled, says, "I *am* saved; I *am* a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Who are you, that you should rebuke *me?* Call *me* to repentance, call *me* to a new life? What better life can I have? for I *am* a member of Christ—a part of Christ's body. What! rebuke *me?* I am a child of God. Cannot you see it in my face? No matter what my walk and conversation is, I am a child of God. Moreover, I am an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. It is true, I drink and swear, and all that, but you know I am an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; for when I die, though I live in constant sin, you will put me in the grave, and tell everybody that I died "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life."

Here let me bring in another point. It is a most fearful fact, that, *in no age since the Reformation, has Popery made such fearful strides in England as during the last few years.* I had comfortably believed that Popery was only feeding itself upon foreign subscriptions, upon a few titled perverts, and imported monks and nuns. I dreamed that its progress was not real. In fact, I have often smiled at the alarm of many of my brethren at the progress of Popery. But, my dear friends, we have been mistaken, grievously mistaken. This great city—London—is now covered with a network of monks and priests and sisters of mercy, and the conversions made are not by ones or twos, but by scores, till England is being regarded as the most hopeful spot for Romish missionary enterprise in

the whole world; and at the present moment there is not a mission which is succeeding to anything like the extent which the English mission is. I covet not their money, I despise their sophistries, but I marvel at the way in which they gain their funds for the erection of their ecclesiastical buildings. It really is an alarming matter to see so many of our countrymen going off to that superstition which as a nation we once rejected, and which it was supposed we should never again receive. Popery is making advances such as you would never believe, though a spectator should tell it to you. Close to your very doors, perhaps even in your own houses, you may have evidence ere long of what a march Romanism is making. And to what is it to be ascribed? I say, with every ground of probability, that there is no marvel that Popery should increase when you have two things to make it grow: first of all, the falsehood of those who profess a faith which they do not believe, which is quite contrary to the honesty of the Romanist, who does through evil report and good report hold his faith; and then you have secondly, this form of error known as baptismal regeneration, commonly called Puseyism, which is not only Puseyism, but Church-of-Englandism, because it is in the Prayer-book, as plainly as words can express it,—you have this baptismal regeneration, preparing stepping-stones to make it easy for men to go to Rome. In one of our courts of legislature, but recently, the Lord Chief Justice showed his superstition, by speaking of "the risk of the calamity of children dying unbaptized!" Among Dissenters you see a veneration for structures, a modified belief in the sacredness of places, which is all idolatry; for to believe in the sacredness of anything but of God and of his own word, is to idolize, whether it is to believe in the sacredness of the men, the priests, or in the sacredness of the bricks and mortar, or of the fine linen, or what not, what you may use in the worship of God. I see this coming up everywhere—a belief in ceremony, a resting in ceremony, a veneration for altars, fonts, and churches,—a veneration so profound that we must not venture upon a remark, or straightway of sinners we are chief. Here is the essence and soul of Popery,

peeping up under the garb of a decent respect for sacred things. It is impossible but that the Church of Rome must spread, when we who are the watchdogs of the fold are silent, and others are gently and smoothly turfing the road, and making it as soft and smooth as possible, that converts may travel down to the nethermost hell of Popery. We want John Knox back again. Do not talk to me of mild and gentle men, of soft manners and squeamish words: we want the fiery Knox; and even though his vehemence should "ding our pulpits into blads," it were well if he did but rouse our hearts to action. We want Luther, to tell men the truth unmistakably, in homely phrase. The velvet has got into our ministers' mouths of late, but we must unrobe ourselves of soft raiment, and truth must be spoken, and nothing but truth; for of all lies which have dragged millions down to hell, I look upon this as being one of the most atrocious,—that in a Protestant Church there should be found those who swear that baptism saves the soul. Call a man a Baptist, or a Presbyterian, or a Dissenter, or a Churchman,—that is nothing to me: if he says that baptism saves the soul, out upon him, out upon him: he states what God never taught, what the Bible never laid down, and what ought never to be maintained by men who profess that the Bible, and the whole Bible, is the religion of Protestants.

I have spoken thus much, and there will be some who will say, spoken thus much bitterly. Very well; be it so. Physic is often bitter, but it shall work well, and the physician is not bitter because his medicine is so; or if he be accounted so, it will not matter, so long as the patient is cured. At all events, it is no business of the patient whether the physician is bitter or not: his business is with his own soul's health. There is the truth, and I have told it to you; and if there should be one among you, or if there should be one among the readers of this sermon, who is resting on baptism, or resting upon ceremonies of any sort, I do beseech you, shake off this venomous faith into the fire as Paul did the viper which fastened on his hand. I pray you do not rest on baptism. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. That alone saves.

"No outward form can make you clean,
The leprosy lies deep within."

I do beseech you to remember that you must have a new heart and a right spirit, and baptism cannot give you these. You must turn from your sins and follow after Christ; you must have such a faith as shall make your life holy and your speech devout, or else you have not the faith of God's elect, and into God's kingdom you shall never come. I pray you never rest upon this wretched and rotten foundation, this deceitful invention of antichrist. Oh! may God save you from it, and bring you to seek the true rock of refuge for weary souls.

In the second place, we say that FAITH IS THE INDISPENSABLE REQUISITE TO SALVATION. "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved; he that *believeth not* shall be damned." Faith is the one indispensable requisite to salvation. This faith is the gift of God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. Some men believe not on Jesus; they believe not, because they are not of Christ's sheep, as he himself said unto them. But his sheep hear his voice: he knows them and they follow him; he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. What is this believing? Believing consists in two things. First there is *an accrediting of the testimony of God* concerning his Son. God tells you that his Son came into the world and was made flesh; that he lived on earth for men's sake; that having spent his life in holiness he was offered up a propitiation for sin; that upon the cross he there and then made expiation—so made expiation for the sins of the world that "whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." If you would be saved, you must accredit this testimony which God gives concerning his own Son. Having received his testimony, the next thing is to *confide in it*. Indeed, here lies, I think, the essence of saving faith, to rest yourself for eternal salvation upon the atonement and the righteousness of Jesus Christ, to have done once for all with all reliance upon feelings or upon doings, and to trust in Jesus Christ and in what he did for your salvation.

This is faith, receiving the truth of Christ: first know-

ing it to be true, and then acting upon that belief. Such a faith as this—such real faith as this—makes the man henceforth hate sin. How can he love the thing which made the Saviour bleed? It makes him live in holiness. How can he but seek to honor that God who has loved him so much as to give his Son to die for him? This faith is spiritual in its nature and effects; it operates upon the entire man; it changes his heart, enlightens his judgment, and subdues his will; it subjects him to God's supremacy, and makes him receive God's Word as a little child; it sanctifies his intellect, and makes him willing to be taught God's Word; it cleanses within; it makes clean the inside of the cup and platter, and it beautifies without; it makes clean the exterior conduct and the inner motive, so that the man, if his faith be true and real, becomes henceforth another man.

Now that such faith as this should save the soul, is, I believe, reasonable; yea, more, it is certain, for *we have seen men saved by it* in this very house of prayer. We have seen the harlot lifted out of the Stygian ditch of her sin, and made an honest woman; we have seen the thief reclaimed; we have known the drunkard, in hundreds of instances, to be sobered; we have observed faith to work such a change, that all the neighbors who have seen it have gazed and admired, even though they hated it; we have seen faith deliver men in the hour of temptation, and help them to consecrate themselves and their substance to God; we have seen deeds of heroic consecration to God and displays of witness-bearing against the common current of the times, which have proved to us that faith does affect the man, does save the soul. My hearers, if you would be saved you must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me urge you with all my heart to look nowhere but to Christ crucified for your salvation. Oh! if you rest upon any ceremony, though it be not baptism—if you rest upon any other than Jesus Christ—you must perish, as surely as this book is true. I pray you believe not every spirit, but though I, or an angel from heaven, preach any other doctrine than this, let him be accursed; for this, and this alone, is the soul-saving truth which shall regenerate the world—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be

saved." Away from wax candles, and millinery of Puseyism! away from all the gorgeous pomp of Popery! away from the fonts of Church-of-Englandism! We bid you turn your eyes to that naked cross, where hangs as a bleeding man the Son of God.

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."

There is life in a look at the Crucified; there is life at this moment for you. I would plead with you, lay hold on Jesus Christ! This is *the* foundation: build on it! This is *the* rock of refuge: fly to it! I pray you fly to it now. Life is short: time speeds with eagle's wing. Swift as the dove pursued by the hawk, fly, fly, poor sinner, to God's dear Son: now touch the hem of his garment; now look into that dear face, once marred with sorrows for you; look into those eyes once shedding tears for you. Trust him, and if you find him false, then you must perish; but false you never will find him while this word standeth true, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." God give us this vital, essential faith, without which there is no salvation. So Christ declares, and so it must be.

But now to close, there are some who say, "Ah! but baptism is in the text; where do you put that?"

THE BAPTISM IN THE TEXT IS ONE EVIDENTLY CONNECTED WITH FAITH. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." It strikes me, there is no supposition here that anybody would be baptized who did not believe; or if there be such a supposition, it is very clearly laid down that his baptism will be of no use to him, for he will be damned, baptized or not, unless he believes. The baptism of the text seems to me, my brethren,—if you differ from me I am sorry for it, but I must hold my opinion, and out with it,—it seems to me that baptism is connected with, nay, directly follows belief. I would not insist too much upon the order of the words; but, for other reasons, I think that baptism should follow believing. At any rate, it effectually avoids the error we have been combating. A man who knows that he is saved by believing in Christ does not, when he is baptized, lift his baptism into a saving ordinance. In

fact, he is the very best protester against that mistake, because he holds that he has no right to be baptized until he is saved. He bears a testimony against baptismal regeneration in his being baptized as professedly an already regenerate person.

Brethren, the baptism here meant is a baptism connected with faith, and to this baptism I will admit there is very much ascribed in Scripture. Into that question I am not going; but I do find some very remarkable passages in which baptism is spoken of very strongly. I find this: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." I find as much as this elsewhere. I know that believers' baptism itself does not wash away sin, yet it is so the outward sign and emblem of it to the believer, that the thing visible may be described as the thing signified. Just as our Saviour said: "This is my body," when it was not his body, but bread; yet, inasmuch as it represented his body, it was fair and right according to the usage of language to say, "Take, eat, this is my body." And so, inasmuch as baptism to the believer representeth the washing of sin—it may be called the washing of sin; not that it is so, but that it is to saved souls the outward symbol and representation of what is done by the power of the Holy Spirit in the man who believes in Christ.

What connection has this baptism with faith? I think it has just this, *baptism is the avowal of faith.* The man was Christ's soldier, but now in baptism he puts on his regimentals. The man believed in Christ, but his faith remained between God and his own soul. In baptism he says to the baptizer, "I believe in Jesus Christ;" he says to the church, "I unite with you as a believer in the common truths of Christianity;" he saith to the onlooker, "Whatever you may do, as for me, I will serve the Lord." It is the avowal of his faith.

Next, we think baptism is also to the believer a *testimony of his faith;* he does in baptism tell the world what he believes. "I am about," saith he, "to be buried in water. I believe that the Son of God was metaphorically baptized in suffering; I believe he was literally dead and buried." To rise again out of the water sets forth to all men that

he believes in the resurrection of Christ. There is a showing forth in the Lord's Supper of Christ's death, and there is a showing forth in baptism of Christ's burial and resurrection. It is a type, a sign, a symbol, a mirror to the world,—a looking-glass, in which religion is as it were reflected. We say to the onlooker, when he asks what is the meaning of this ordinance, "We mean to set forth our faith that Christ was buried, and that he rose again from the dead, and we avow this death and resurrection to be the ground of our trust."

Again, baptism is also *Faith's taking her proper place.* It is, or should be, one of her first acts of obedience. Reason looks at baptism, and says, "Perhaps there is nothing in it; it cannot do me any good." "True," says Faith, "and therefore I will observe it. If it did me some good, my selfishness would make me do it; but inasmuch as to my sense there is no good in it, since I am bidden by my Lord thus to fulfill all righteousness, it is my first public declaration that a thing which looks to be unreasonable and seems to be unprofitable, being commanded by God, is law to me. If my Master had told me to pick up six stones and lay them in a row I would do it, without demanding of him, 'What good will it do?' *Cui bono?* is no fit question for soldiers of Jesus. The very simplicity and apparent uselessness of the ordinance should make the believer say, 'Therefore I do it because it becomes the better test to me of my obedience to my Master.'" Baptism is commanded, and faith obeys because it is commanded, and thus takes her proper place.

Once more, *baptism is a refreshment to faith.* While we are made up of body and soul as we are, we shall need some means by which the body shall sometimes be stirred up to co-work with the soul. In the Lord's Supper my faith is assisted by the outward and visible sign. In the bread and in the wine I see no superstitious mystery: I see nothing but bread and wine; but in that bread and wine I do see to my faith an assistant. Through the sign my faith sees the thing signified. So in baptism there is no mysterious efficacy in the baptistery or in the water. We attach no reverence to the one or to the other, but we do see in the water and in the baptism

such assistance as brings home to our faith most manifestly our being buried with Christ, and our rising again in newness of life with him. Explain baptism thus, dear friends, and there is no fear of Popery rising out of it. Explain it thus, and we cannot suppose any soul will be led to trust to it; but it takes its proper place among the ordinances of God's house. To lift it up in the other way, and say men are saved by it—ah! my friends, how much of mischief that one falsehood has done and may do, eternity alone will disclose. Would to God another George Fox would spring up, in all his quaint simplicity and rude honesty, to rebuke the idol-worship of this age; to rail at their holy bricks and mortar, holy lecturns, holy altars, holy surplices, right reverend fathers, and I know not what. These things are not holy. God is holy; his truth is holy: holiness belongs not to the carnal and the material, but to the spiritual. Oh, that a trumpet tongue would cry out against the superstition of the age! Oh, my beloved friends, the comrades of my struggles and witnesses, cling to the salvation of faith, and abhor the salvation of priests! The time is come when there shall be no more truce or parley between God's servants and time-servers. The time is come when those who follow God must follow God, and those who try to trim and dress themselves and find a way which is pleasing to the flesh and gentle to carnal desires, must go their way. Oh, for a truly reformed church in England, and a godly race to maintain it! The world's future depends on it under God; for in proportion as truth is marred at home, truth is maimed abroad. Out of any system which teaches salvation by baptism must spring infidelity, an infidelity which the false church already seems willing to nourish and foster beneath her wing. God save this favored land from the brood of her own established religion. Brethren, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not afraid of any sudden fear nor calamity when it cometh; for he who trusteth to the Lord, mercy shall compass him about, and he who is faithful to God and to Christ shall hear it said at the last, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." May the Lord bless this word, for Christ's sake.

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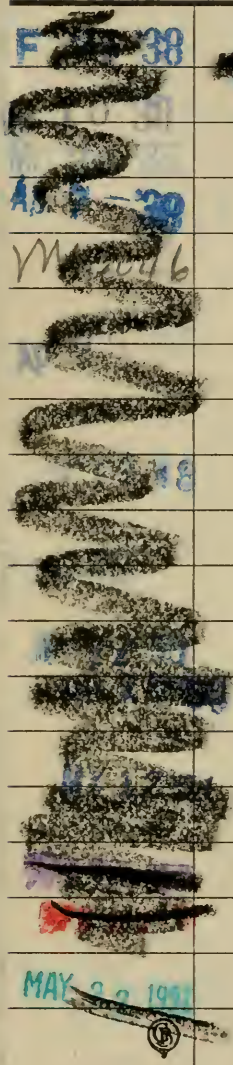

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